

THE Spiritual Magazine.

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EVIDENCES OF SPIRITUALISM IN MODERN WORKS OF HISTORY AND LITERATURE.

PART I.

NOTHING in our daily reading is more striking than the fact, that on all sides and in all works written within a comparatively recent period, and many of them down to the present date, we are met by the most palpable evidences of spiritual phenomena. We can get through no history, and no literary journal, without encountering such facts at almost every step. I have lately had occasion to examine the volumes of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, from its commencement in 1731. Seeing a constant succession of cases of the supernatural, I took out the most remarkable ones, and here they are. I believe it would be just the same if we examined the series of any other journal, or the *Annual Register*, during the same period. It is thus a curious fact that whilst literary journalists have been repudiating supernatural agency and appearances as mere superstition, they have been themselves steadily and regularly accumulating the evidences of these things ; nature being in them stronger than education.

WILLIAM HOWITT.

EXTRACT FROM THE "GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE," VOL. I.

The following narrative, given by a gentleman of unexceptionable honour and veracity, has been lately published at Edinburgh :—

"One William Sutor, aged about 37, a farmer in Middlemanse, belonging to the laird of Balgown, near Craighal, being, about the month of December, 1728, in the fields with his servants,

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near his own house, overheard at some distance, as it were, an uncommon shrieking and noise ; and they, following the voice, fancied they saw a dark grey-coloured dog, but as it was a dark night, they concluded that it was a fox, and accordingly were for setting on their dogs ; but it was very observable that not one of them would so much as point his head that way. About a month after, the said Sutor being occasionally in the same spot, and much about the same time of night, it appeared to him again, and passing, touched him so smartly on the thigh that he felt a pain all that night. In December, 1729, it again cast up to him at about the same place, and passed him at some distance. In June, 1730, it appeared to him as formerly, and it was now he began to judge it was something extraordinary. On the last Monday of November, 1730, about sky-setting, as he was coming from Drumlochy, this officious visitor passed him as formerly, and in passing he distinctly heard it speak these words :—" Within eight or ten days, do or die ;" and instantly disappeared, leaving him not a little perplexed. Next morning he came to his brother James's house, and gave him a particular account of all that had happened ; and that night about ten o'clock, these two brothers, having been visiting their sister at Glanhallow, and returning home, stepped aside to see the remarkable spot, where they had no sooner arrived than it appeared to William, who, pointing his finger to it, desired his brother and a servant who was with them to look at it, but neither of them could see any such thing. Next Saturday evening, as William was at his sheepfold, it came up to him and audibly uttered these words :—" Come to the spot of ground within half an hour." Whereupon he went home, and taking a staff in his hand, came to the ground, being at last determined to see the issue. He had scarcely encircled himself with a line of circumvallation, when his troublesome familiar came up to him, and he asked it, " In the name of God, who are you ?" It answered, " I am David Sutor, George Sutor's brother. I killed a man more than 35 years ago, at a bush by east of the road as you go into the hole." He said to it, " David Sutor was a man, and you appear as a dog." It answered, " I killed him with a dog, and am made to speak out of the mouth of a dog ; and I tell you to go and bury these bones."

" This coming to the ears of the minister of Blair, the lairds Glascloon and Rychalzie and about forty men went together to the said hole, but after opening ground in several places found no bones. On the 2nd of December, about midnight, when William was in bed, it came to his door, and said, " Come away, you will find the bones at the side of the withered bush, and there are but eight of them left ;" and told him at the same time for a sign, that he would find the print of a cross impressed on

the ground. Next day William and his brother, with about forty or fifty people, who had followed out of curiosity, came to the place, where they discovered the bush and the cross by it, and upon digging the ground about a foot down, found the eight bones; all which they immediately wrapped in clean linen, and being put into a coffin with a mort cloth over it, were interred that evening in the churchyard of Blair, attended by about a hundred persons.

“*N.B.*—Several people in that country remember to have seen this David Sutor, and that he ’listed for a soldier, and went abroad about 34 or 35 years ago. See a like story, p. 304.”

The story here alluded to is that of the discovery of the murderer of Stockden, the publican of Cripplegate, who was murdered in his own house, December 16, 1695. See this Magazine, Vol. II. New Series, p. 44.

AN ACT RESEMBLING THAT OF THE INDIAN JUGGLERS.

There must have been in London in 1731, a person who could perform the same magical feats as the Indian fakirs. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. I., p. 79, says:—“The Algerine ambassadors went to see Mr. Fawkes, who, at their request, showed them a prospect of Algiers, and raised up an apple tree which bore ripe apples in less than a minute's time, which several of the company tasted of.”

A HEALING MIRACLE.

Amongst the foreign intelligence in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. III., p. 217, is the following:—“From Brescia.—The master of a band of music belonging to the cathedral of that city died there after a life so abstemious, that he had eaten nothing for 32 years past but herbs boiled with a little salt over a lamp, having never once in that time had any fire. His dead body being exposed to the view of the populace, a woman who had been a long time lame in both her hands, no sooner touched the corpse but she was immediately cured, and several others many years blind. A guard of soldiers was obliged to be set over the body, as it would have been soon cut to pieces by the populace for relics.”

VOICE SUPERNATURALLY HEARD.

A certain young woman living in Bristol was taken ill of the small-pox. Her mother attended her in her illness. Her father was a clergyman living more than twenty miles from the city.

One night her sister, who was at her father's, being in bed, heard the voice of her mother lamenting herself upon the death of her daughter. This much surprised her, knowing that her mother was then as far as Bristol. When she arose in the morning, her father seeing her look much concerned, asked her what was the matter with her. "Nothing," she says. Her father replied, "I am sure something is amiss, and I must know what it is." "Why then, father," says she, "I believe my sister Molly is dead, for this night I heard the voice of my mother lamenting her death." Says her father, "I heard the same myself, and her voice seemed to me to be in my study." Soon after, the same morning, came a message with tidings of her death. The deceased was brought to her father's to be buried, and after the funeral, her mother relating the manner of her daughter's illness, and that as soon as her daughter was dead, she being weary with watching and tired for want of sleep, lay down in her clothes, and dreamed that she was with them, telling her grief for the loss of her daughter. This surprised them, and asking the time it appeared to be much the same in which they heard the voice. The young woman was buried April 1, 1726. Her sister, who heard the voice, is now living in Bristol, and is ready to satisfy any enquirer of the truth of this fact.

This narrative was communicated to the *Gentleman's Magazine* by a Mr. John Walker, of Painswick, Gloucestershire, and appears in Vol. IX., p. 75, of that journal. It led to a discussion with a Mr. Martin, of Chichester, who raised very much the same arguments against the possibility of such a thing as are used now.

A PROPHECY CURIOUSLY VERIFIED.

"Not many years ago a gentleman from a considerable distance, came upon a visit to a friend's house, and on the last day of his journey was obliged to cross a great river, or arm of the sea, in a little ferry boat, which he did prosperously enough; and in his friend's house at night, being of the gay reasoning part of mankind, he, in the course of a mixed conversation, acquainted the company that his nativity had been calculated immediately upon his birth, which was that he would be drowned on such a day of the month, and such a year of his age, or when he should be so many years, months and days old. And, he added gaily, that this was the very day, pleasantly ridiculing the superstition of his mother and the good women about her at his birth, and declaring that when he crossed the ferry that day he did it with the more pleasure in order to expose the weakness of such idle conceits. The company joined heartily with him, and diverted

themselves much with the pitiable superstition of most women and common people. They sate up late, and were no doubt not very sober, and this gentleman taking it into his head to cross the yard alone in the dark, plunged headlong into a deep well which was open, and was drowned before any of the family knew what had become of him."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XIV., p. 659.

WHAT HAS NOT BEEN DENIED?

There is a class of people whose conceit is so enormous that they think that if, like the fabled Atlas, they cannot support the heavens they can at least overthrow them. There is nothing which one or other of these people have not denied the existence of. They have denied God, a future world, revelation, Jesus Christ, and almost every thing and person of note. Homer has been declared a myth. Those who admitted his existence have denied him the authorship of the *Iliad*, and others who have allowed him to have composed the *Iliad*, have denied him the *Odyssey*. Father Hardouin, a Jesuit, in 1693, published *Prolusio Chronologiæ*, in which he showed from dates as well as internal evidence, that Virgil might have written the *Georgics*, but could not possibly have written the *Æneid*. Another of his reasons was the silence of Pliny on the subject—an argument of the kind employed against the history of Christ and Christianity—namely, that the Roman writers of the time made no mention of this or that historic fact stated as such in the Gospels. When told that Ovid, Juvenal, Statius, Martial, Tacitus, &c., expressly acknowledged the *Æneid* to be Virgil's, he then declared all these authors were for the most part as apocryphal as Virgil himself, and asserted that on the revival of ancient learning, a club of learned but mischievous men compiled these works, and palmed them off on their contemporaries as ancient and genuine. Very clever fellows, indeed, these must have been; and the chief of them, he says, was one Severus Archontius, and the materials on which they based these forgeries were a few old inscriptions, coins, and a few fragments of Virgil and Horace, and the works of Cicero and Pliny the elder, which were all the genuine remains of Roman literature.

Since then Shakespeare's dramas have been denied him, and attributed to Lord Bacon by a Miss Bacon, of America.

CASE OF CURE OF SCROFULA BY TOUCH.

Mr. Carte, in his *History of England*, Book IV., p. 291, speaking of the practice of the Kings of England and France curing the King's Evil by touch, says, "But whatever is to be

said in favour of its being appropriated to the eldest descent of the first branch of the royal line of England and France, I have myself seen a very remarkable instance of such a cure, which could not possibly be ascribed to the regal unction." He then tells us of one Christopher Lovel, born at Wells in Somersetshire, but when he grew up residing in Bristol and working as a labourer. This man was so afflicted with scrofula that he was a most wretched object. His neck, head, arms, &c., abounded with sores, and on one side of his neck was such a tumour as obliged him to go with his head always on one side. No medical advice or remedy being of any use, he resolved to go abroad and get touched. By means of an uncle, an old seaman, in August, 1716, he managed to get across to France, and made his way to Paris, where he was touched by the eldest lineal descendant of the French kings, who had for ages cured that disease by touch. This prince, however, was then neither crowned nor anointed, so that it could not proceed from this regal act, but nevertheless the effect was the same. The man was completely cured, and got back to Bristol in perfect health in the beginning of January following, having been only four months and a few days on his journey. There Carte saw him in vigorous health, having no remains of his complaint except the red scars on the five places where the sores had been, but then entirely healed and as sound as the rest of his body. Dr. Lane and Dr. Pye, the latter of whom had tried in vain for three years to cure Lovel, took Mr. Carte to him, and declared it the most wonderful cure they had ever witnessed. Mr. Carte adds that he himself was perfectly sceptical of most cures till Mr. Anstis, Garter-King-of-Arms, furnished him with undoubted proofs of them in the English records, and such as were recorded by Tucker in his work on that subject. But nothing could be more surprising than this cure of Lovel's, and no case could be known to such infinite multitudes of people as this.

OLD BRIDGET BOSTOCK, THE HEALER OF CHESHIRE, 1748.

Old Bridget Bostock, of Coppenhall, betwixt Sandbach and Nantwich, in her day was as famous as the Zouave of our time for curing almost every afflicted creature that came to her. The Nantwich papers of August and September, 1748, gave this account of her:—"Old Bridget Bostock fills the country with as much talk as the rebels did. She hath all her lifetime made it her business to cure her neighbours of sore legs and other disorders, but her reputation seems now so wonderfully increased that people came to her from far and near. A year ago she had, as I remember, about 40 under her care, which afterwards in-

creased to 100 a week, and then to 160. Sunday sen'night, after dinner," says the writer, "I and my wife went to this doctress's house, and were told by Mr. S—— and Tom M——, who kept the door and let people in by fives and sixes, that they had that day told off 600 whom she had administered to, besides making a cheese. She at length grew so faint, for she never broke her fast till she had done, that at six o'clock she was obliged to give over, though there were then more than 60 persons whom she had not attended to. Monday last she had 700, and every day now pretty nearly that number. She cures the blind, the deaf, the lame of all sorts, rheumatism, king's evil, hysteric fits, falling fits, shortness of breath, dropsy, palsy, leprosy, cancers, and in short almost every thing; and all the means she uses for cure are only stroking with fasting spittle, and praying for them. It is hardly credible to think what cures she performs. Some people grow well whilst in the house; others on the road home; and it is said none miss. People come 60 miles round. In our lane, where there have not been two coaches seen before these twelve years, now three or four pass in a day, and the poor come by cart loads. She is about 70 years of age, and keeps old Bostock's house, who allows her 35s. a-year wages; and though money is offered her she takes none for her cures. Her dress is very plain. She wears a flannel waistcoat, a great linsey apron, a pair of clogs, and a plain cap tied with a halfpenny lace. So many people of fashion now come to her, that several people make a comfortable subsistence by holding their horses. In short, the poor, the rich, the lame, the blind and the deaf all pray for her and bless her; but *the doctors curse her.*"

This account was confirmed by two correspondents of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XVIII., pp. 413 and 414, who had been and seen for themselves. One of them says that the clergyman of Coppenhall, the Rev. William Harding, gave her a good character; said that she was one of the most constant attendants of his church, and had immediately cured his son of lameness when all other doctors had failed; that Mrs. Gradwell, of Liverpool, had wonderfully recovered her sight by her assistance; but that it was not true that *all* were cured who came.

These accounts fetched out, as they were sure to do, one of the class of Senior Wranglers, who, *without* having gone to see, endeavoured to *reason* the facts away that thousands of others had seen. Bridget Bostock's cures could not, according to him, be supernatural, because supernatural ones are *instant*; they could not be natural, because she used no natural means; *ergo*, they must be what we now-a-days call humbug, an expressive word that the Wranglers of that day were not fortunate enough to have. What most offended this writer was, that Bridget

demand a great deal of faith in her patients, which showed, he said, "what a daring, presumptuous and impudent mockery was being carried on." And the man did not see what an impudent mockery he himself was carrying on, in sitting at home at a distance and scribbling, without going to see what the real facts were, and contradicting those who did. That imposture is sometimes committed is just as likely as that truth is treated as imposture; and those only who look into such things can confirm the true and expose the false. A very impudent pretence of a great cure was made by one Charles Doe, at Colchester, in 1705-6, and published in pamphlets, with a list of numerous witnesses, which on being inquired into, was discovered to be an utter forgery. Those who instituted this inquiry did what every lover of truth should do, and rendered the public a real service.

DIVINING ROD.

A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* asserts the virtues of these rods, and gives figures of them, and directions for their use, Vol. XXI., p. 507. Soon after, another writer gave a very striking instance of the reality of the power of such rods. He states, that Linnæus on a journey to Scania, hearing the virtues of the divining rod highly extolled, determined to try it. He hid a purse of one hundred ducats under a ranunculus, which grew by itself in a meadow, and bade his secretary, the operator with the wand, find it, if he could. The ranunculus was speedily trodden down by the throng of people, and, for some time, the rod discovered nothing. Linnæus then attempted to find the purse, but could not, and persisted in seeking it in a particular quarter. The secretary having tried that quarter, declared that it was not there, and, eventually, following his rod, found the purse in a different direction. Linnæus adds, that another such an experiment would have made a proselyte of him.

APPARITION AND VOICE OF A LIVING PERSON.

A correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXII., p. 173, states, that when he was a draper's apprentice, he used to dine at his father's on the opposite side of the street. Standing at the shop door on the 23rd of August, 1736, with his mistress, and the maid, and a Mr. Bloxam, afterwards a haberdasher of Cateaton Street, London, he heard his father's voice calling him. He replied, "Coming, sir," but continued to look at the book of

patterns which they were examining. A second time he heard his father call, and again answered, and the maid, who heard it too, answered, "He is coming, Mr. W——." Still continuing to look at the pattern book, he saw his father come out of the door, with an angry look, call in an emphatic tone, and, going in, bang the door after him, with a loud sound. Both the mistress and maid told him to be gone at once. On reaching the door, however, he found it locked, and, on going round to the back door, he found no sign of dinner, and his mother-in-law told him his father was not at home, and would not dine at home that day. His astonishment and horror were great, for he imagined it a sign of his father's death. This, however, was not the case, but his uncle, a gunner on board the ship *Biddeford*, then stationed at Leith, died that day, and about the same hour. Why the father, instead of the uncle's image, appeared is beyond the knowledge of such things yet possessed to explain; but the writer says that it made a serious and religious man of him for life.

A BOY WHO PREACHED IN HIS FITS.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. XXX., p. 236, we have the following account:—A boy about 16 years of age, named Joseph Payne, went to live with a Captain Fisher, of Reading. He had been previously a servant to a farmer, at Lambourn Woodlands. This farmer was a Quaker, and not only gave him instructions in religion, but had him in at the family readings of the Scriptures, which are regular in the society. After being sometime at Captain Fisher's he fell down one day in a fit, greatly alarming the servants. Several persons soon got about him, and were astonished at seeing him sit up, and with his eyes closed, begin a sermon which he continued in a regular and pertinent manner for half an hour. This being reported to his master, he ordered him to be narrowly watched to see if he were practising any imposture. In about a week he went into another fit, and preached another sermon. His eyes were, as before, closed and fixed in his head, and, as before, on coming out of the fit, he declared that he knew nothing either of what he had said or what had been done. On a third occasion a Dr. Hooper was present, and to test the insensibility of the lad, he held a lighted candle to his hand as he held it out in his discourse; it raised a blister but produced no sign of sensation whatever. The discourse which he gave on this occasion is printed at length in the Magazine. It is on the words,—“They led Him away to crucify Him,” and extends to upwards of five columns of the Magazine. It is a much better sermon than you could have

heard in most country pulpits of that day. It is, however, something rambling, and evinces a memory stored with passages of Scripture, and with the reflections naturally deducible from them, rather than anything original and supernatural. The fact of a country lad, however, in a state of catalepsy, regularly pronouncing such discourses, shews a peculiar condition of mind in a state of catalepsy, which borders on the spiritual, and deserves the close attention and enquiry of those who are interested in advancing our psychological knowledge.

THE COCK LANE GHOST.

This story is told in Vol. XXXII., p. 43, and is set down as a piece of imposition in a man of the name of Parsons to obtain money from a Mr. Kent, who was supposed to have murdered a young woman in his keeping. There is no proof, however, that Parsons ever attempted any such extortion of money, and both he and his daughter, a child of twelve years old, who was the medium, stedfastly denied any imposition. Parsons was clerk of St. Sepulchre's Church, near Cock Lane. The knockings and scratchings which frightened the child were very much of the character of such manifestations now-a-days; and these going away on one occasion, and making themselves heard in a house several doors off, to the great alarm of the people there, is not accountable for by anything discovered. Great stress was laid on the ghost having said that it would make itself evident in the vault of St. Sepulchre, where the corpse of the lady in question lay; and that on several gentlemen going there at the time proposed nothing was heard. This, indeed, was not likely, for these wise men did not take the little girl with them, and not having the medium, they of course had no manifestation. On their return, they strictly questioned the girl, but could draw no confession from her; in fact, the inquirers were totally ignorant of the conditions of such enquiries. Kent, however, the person accused by the ghost, as a matter of course, indicted Parsons, his wife, and one Mary Frazer, the Reverend Mr. Moore, and a Mr. James, for a conspiracy to defame him, and got Parsons set in the pillory, and himself, the wife, and Mary Frazer imprisoned for different terms, and Mr. Moore and Mr. James smartly fined. Parsons lost his post as clerk and went mad. Dr. Johnson being mixed up in the enquiry about the ghost, has given greater notoriety to the affair; but a careful examination of this story by modern lights, and the rules of regular evidence, have only tended to prove that the manifestations of the ghost were genuine enough.

A TESTIMONY TO SPIRITUAL ATTENDANTS AND TO AUDIBLE SPIRIT VOICE IN 1765.

Dr. J. Cook, a physician of Leigh, but which place of that name is not said, in a letter published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and dated September 18th, 1765, says, "Ever since I was three and twenty years of age I have had an invisible being or beings attend me at times, both at home and abroad, and that has by some gentle token or other given me warning and notice that I should shortly lose a particular friend, or a patient. They began and continued from our marriage till the decease of my first wife, in May, 1728, and her infant daughter, who lived with me but seven months, and but six weeks after her mother, when they were very frequent and troublesome about my house, as was well known, and noticed by many of our friends and neighbours. After that they came seldom, but so gentle, civil, and familiar, that I chose rather to have them about my house than not, and would not, if I were to tell it, part with the same without some extraordinary consideration upon that very account, and I really hope that they will never leave me as long as I live, though my spouse wishes otherwise, to whom they are not so agreeable.

"I may be reckoned a whimsical visionary, or what not, but I know I am far from it, being neither superstitious, enthusiastic, or timorous; and I am certain, too, I am not deceived by others, we all having had many and various impressions from invisible agents; and I, myself, by no fewer than three of my senses, and those so often repeated that they became quite easy and familiar without any terror or amazement. I take the hint at once, and wait for the certain and infallible issue. I have spoken to them often, but never received any answer, and think I have courage enough to stand a private conference.

"Sometimes we have had their hints frequent and close together; at other times, but seldom, and at a great distance of time. But this I have observed, that rarely any patient or friend that I respected, or that valued me, departs hence, but I have some kind of sensible notice or warning of it, but yet so discreet and mild as never to flutter or frighten me. This notice which is either by seeing, feeling, or hearing, is not fixed to any certain distance of time previous to their death, but I have it a week, a month, or more, before their decease, and once only three days, when I actually heard the spiritual agent form an articulate voice, as I was abed, with a most pathetic emphasis, "*I am gone*;" which was fulfilled the Monday morning following by the sudden death of my cousin's daughter who was upon a visit at my house, and was well two days before.

"At first, in 1728, I kept a book of account, where I entered every notice of warning, with the particular circumstances attending, and the event that succeeded such notices, but they were then so frequent and numerous that I grew quite weary in writing them down, so left off that method, resolving to take them in future just as they came. The very last hint I had was on Saturday night, the 6th of July, 1765, in my chamber, about eleven o'clock, as I was walking to my bed, being from home, attending a patient, to whom I was that morning sent for, and whom I lost on the 10th of the same month. I lay no stress on such notices, so as to affect my practice, but exert myself for the patient all the more for conscience sake."

Dr. Cook proceeds to say that he had received such warnings above a hundred times. Twice only he had seen apparitions, but had heard and felt them times innumerable. He imagined that they were neither angels nor demons, but a middle race of spirits, kindly disposed towards men. One of the apparitions presented itself, he says, at noonday in his house, and his attention was drawn to it by the barking of his little dog, who saw it first. He answers the *cui bono* question by his consciousness of how much such revelations confirm the truth of a future life, and of the stimulus which it must afford to every reflective person to thank God for such assurances, and to prepare for that invisible existence. This case is peculiarly interesting, from the occurrence of an audible voice, showing that the audible voices now so frequently heard, had a well-authenticated precedent a hundred years ago.

EMOTIONS AWAKENED BY ANGEL VISITS.

THE joys of spiritual intercourse are the joys of the new-born soul, and the philosophy of spiritual intercourse is the philosophy of the enlightened soul. In these joys and in this philosophy the trembling heart finds a source of heavenly peace, and derives a pleasure which earth cannot afford. When the storm arises in the sky, and the clouds are blackened with their hidden wrath, the soul looks up to heaven for light; and when the rolling billows heave in the commotion of the angry winds, the radiance of the cheerful morn throws its calm upon the troubled deep. So when the world has become tempest-tossed and darkened in its course, and when the throbbing bosom has had no rest in its fearful agony, the blessed and blessing spirits have visited the earth, that the storm may sink into the silence of nature's harmony, and that the clouds may float from their azure home.—*Rev. R. P. Amber.*

PRESERVATION BY SPIRITUAL AGENCY FROM THE EFFECTS OF FIRE.

IN the third chapter of Exodus we read that while Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, he came to Mount Horeb—

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush; and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.

In the third chapter of the Book of Daniel the narrative sets forth how Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, set up a gigantic image of gold in the plain of Dura, and commanded all people at the sound of music to fall down and worship it, under pain of being the same hour cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Certain Jews whom he had placed in high authority were accused to him of disregarding this mandate; whereupon, in rage and fury he commanded these men to be brought before him. They were brought to him, and the king enquired of them if this report was true, warning them that if they disobeyed him the threatened punishment would at once be visited on them. To this they answered boldly to his face that they would not serve his gods, nor worship the image he had set up.

Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: therefore he spake, and commanded that they should heat the furnace one seven times more than it was wont to be heat.

And he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace.

Then these men were bound in their coats, their hosen, and their hats, and their other garments, and were cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Therefore, because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace.

Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, and spake and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king.

He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, came forth of the midst of the fire.

And the princes, governors, and captains, and the king's counsellors, being gathered together, saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them.

Then Nebuchadnezzar spake and said, Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any god except their own God.

Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill; because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort.

Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the province of Babylon.

These accounts are not from the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, but from a book which Christendom professes to believe, not only as true, but as in a special sense sacred and divine; they are read in churches, we teach our children to read them; to call them openly in question, has, even in times within the memory of many of our readers, brought down upon the offender not only social obloquy, but legal pains and penalties. And yet, we cannot help asking, incredulously, does Christendom believe these things? Do the men of science—the Professors at the Royal Institution—believe them? Nay, do the members of our churches really and truly believe them, or do they only assent to them in the same sense that Clergymen give their “unfeigned assent and consent” to the Thirty-nine Articles, and to all that is contained in the *Book of Common Prayer*; that is, with certain reservations and an unlimited latitude of interpretation? Is it all a game of make-believe we are playing—one of the many “shams” against which Mr. Carlyle has not yet thundered?

No doubt popular lecturers at Mechanics' Institutions and elsewhere who know all about the laws of nature, and what can, and what cannot be; who, according to the advice of Professor Faraday, “set out with *clear ideas* of the naturally possible and impossible,” could easily demonstrate (were they but permitted, and had they the necessary courage) that these things never did and never could happen; and would congratulate themselves and their audiences on the superior enlightenment of the present age, consequent upon cheap lectures and penny newspapers. And yet, spite of chemical experiments and the magic lantern, Professor Pepper and the *Morning Star*, the “monster superstition,” stupid, obstinate brute, refuses to be either converted or to “clear the track.” He objects to being crushed, and in every age, even down to this “enlightened nineteenth century,” when the schoolmaster and the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge are abroad, goes on relating and believing facts “which can't possibly be, you know,” to the great disgust of the *savans*; and very much, indeed, in some respects, as if said *savans* all this time had been writing, experimenting, demonstrating, orating and perorating to the inhabitants of Jupiter.

Indeed the perpetuity of the belief in spiritual agencies, and the constant recurrence in history of the facts which originate or sustain it, is one of those perplexing phenomena which, among other ends, seem specially designed for the botheration of

philosophers. It has an obstinate vitality; if it seems to die, there is always a resurrection for it. The ghosts will not be laid. Just now, in modern Spiritualism, there is a universal resurrection of the spiritual beliefs of past ages. Those whom "philosophy" supposed herself to have slain have risen to their feet an armed host, and "philosophy" has to "fight her battles o'er again" under greater disadvantages than ever, and with all the odds against her.

To speak now of only one form of this universal belief—that of preservation by spiritual agency from the effects of fire. The Scripture narratives we have quoted, if not fully paralleled, yet have their credibility vindicated by facts of corresponding order in later times, and, doubtless, produced by the operation of the same laws. The work of Jamblichus (written in the third century), *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Assyrians*, is a compendium of the knowledge of spirit-manifestation and the practice of spirit-communion which existed in the ancient world. In Sect. III, chap. iv., Jamblichus points out "the signs by which those who are rightly possessed by the gods may be known." One of the signs of those who are thus "a vehicle or instrument to the inspiring gods," is that "they are not conscious of the state they are in, neither as they were before, nor in any other way; nor in short do they convert to themselves their own intelligence, or assert any knowledge which is peculiarly their own." He tells us, as one indication of this, that—"Many through divine inspiration, *are not burned when fire is introduced to them, the inspiring influence preventing the fire from touching them.* Many, also, though burned, do not apprehend that they are so, because they do not then live an animal life."

Some of the early Christian martyrs gave illustration of their insensibility to the pain of fire to which Jamblichus here alludes, affirming that in the fire they felt no pain, that it was to them as a bed of roses. Polycarp, three days before his martyrdom, had a vision by which he knew his impending fate, and told his friends "I shall be burned alive!" He was not daunted by the prospect. A letter giving an account of his martyrdom and the attending circumstances, was written by the Church of Smyrna, of which he was the Bishop, and was addressed to all sister churches. This letter states that on his way to the place of execution "there came a voice from heaven, saying, 'Be strong and quit thyself like a man, Polycarp.' Now no one saw who spoke to him, but many of our brethren present heard the voice. Then Polycarp, looking sternly around on the people, shaking his head at them, with a deep groan, and with a mouth but half open, *as one who spoke not his own words, but those of*

another, and looking up to heaven, said, 'take away the wicked.' Polycarp having then made a full and final confession of Christ, the executioner kindled the fire, and the flame began to blaze to a great height. When, behold, a mighty wonder appeared to us whose lot it was to see it, and who were reserved by heaven to declare to others what we had seen. For the flame, forming a kind of arch, like to the sail of a ship, filled with the wind, encompassed the body of the martyr, as in a circle; who stood in the midst of it, not as flesh, which is burnt, but bread, which is baked, or as gold and silver glowing in a furnace. . . . At length when these wicked men saw that his body *could not be consumed by fire*, they commanded the executioner to draw near, and to thrust his sword into him."

Speaking of others who suffered martyrdom with him, the letter says, "while they were under torments they were absent from the body, or, rather, the Lord Christ stood by them and conversed with them, and revealed things to them inconceivable by man, as if they were no longer men, but already become angels."

The Apostle John is said to have been cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, by order of the Emperor Domitian, and to have come out unhurt. And Strabo tells us that the priestesses of Diana at Castabala, in Cappadocia, were *accustomed to walk over burning coal*; and at the annual festival held in the temple of Apollo on Mount Soracte, in Etruria, the Hirpi *marched over burning coals*, and on this account were exempted from military service, and received other privileges from the Roman Senate.

In every nation, says Gibbon, the Deity has been invoked to confirm the truth, or to punish the falsehood, of human testimony. Out of this has grown the practice of "The Ordeal;" a solemn appeal to heaven to establish by some visible sign—by some manifest intervention—the innocence of persons wrongfully accused of some flagrant offence. The practice has prevailed extensively, and is of very high antiquity, and the ordeal has been of various kinds; perhaps the most ancient on record being that of "the water of jealousy," of which the account is given in the 5th chapter of the Book of Numbers. But the chief ordeal seems to have been the purgation by fire. We are not now considering the wisdom or folly, the piety or presumption of this usage; whether in certain conditions of society and under peculiar circumstances it might be justified; or, whether it is to be wholly reprobated in all cases. We refer to it only as evidence of the wide-spread belief that, as a matter of fact, ordinary natural effects have been averted by means of spiritual intervention. It has been a practice alike of the African and the Brahmin, the Pagan and the Christian.

It appears to have been well known to the ancient Greeks; for, in the *Antigone* of Sophocles, a person suspected by Creon of a misdemeanour, declares himself ready "to handle hot iron and to walk over fire," in order to manifest his innocence; which, the scholiast tells us, was then an usual mode of purgation.

In India, for the fire ordeal an excavation made in the ground is filled with a wood fire: into this the person accused must walk barefooted; and, if his foot be unhurt, he is held blameless; but if it be burned he is held guilty. It is still (or was till recently) in practice when satisfactory information cannot be obtained, among the Gentoos, and is of high antiquity.

Simplicius, Bishop of Autun, in the fourth century, is said to have cleared himself of a charge brought against him by taking up a handful of burning coal and holding it to his breast without injury, in attestation of his innocence; and St. Britius, Bishop of Tours, in the fifth century, is related to have cleared himself from a charge of incontinence in a similar manner.

During the middle ages the purgation by fire was one of the ordeals which prevailed for many centuries: it was a solemn appeal to heaven to vindicate the innocent when innocence could not be otherwise proven; and it was a test by which in England, and in various countries of Europe, that innocence could be legally established.

Blackstone, in his chapter "Of Trial and Conviction," writes:—"Fire-ordeal was performed either by taking up in the hand, unhurt, a piece of red-hot iron, of one, two, or three pounds weight; or else by walking, barefoot and blindfold, over nine red-hot ploughshares, laid lengthwise at unequal distances; and if the party escaped being hurt, he was adjudged innocent; but if it happened otherwise, he was then condemned as guilty. By this method Queen Emma, the mother of Edward the Confessor, is mentioned to have cleared her character when suspected of familiarity with Alwyn, Bishop of Winchester.—*Rudhouse's Hist. Mag.*, Winton, Book iv., chap. 1."*

* "In the cathedral at Winchester—if we are to believe the ancient annalists and the popular songs of succeeding ages—the widow of the victorious Canute; the celebrated Emma who had been the wife of two kings and was now the mother of a third, passed the fiery ordeal, and *walked unhurt over nine red-hot ploughshares*. She came thither the preceding day from the Abbey of Wherwell, whither she had retired, and spent the night before the altar in prayer. When the morning broke there came the king, the bishops, and all the multitude of people, to witness this fearful spectacle; and when they saw her walk, supported by two bishops, over the burning metal, not merely unhurt but unconscious of it—thus being cleared by Divine power itself from the breath of calumny—the thousands of spectators made the vaults of the ancient mynstre, and the vault of heaven itself, ring with their acclamations."—*Howitt's Visits to Remarkable Places*, Vol. i., p. 428.

Dr. Henry observes in reference to the ordeals in ancient Britain, that, if we suppose few or none escaped conviction who exposed themselves to those fiery trials, we shall be very much mistaken. "For the histories of those times contain *innumerable examples* of persons plunging their naked arms into boiling water, handling red-hot balls of iron, and walking upon burning ploughshares without receiving the least injury. Many learned men (he adds) have been much puzzled to account for this, and disposed to think that Providence graciously interposed in a miraculous manner, for the preservation of injured innocence."

The ordeal was accompanied with religious service within consecrated walls, and the solemnity with which the Church superintended the appeal to Heaven invested it with a sacred character, and must have been awfully impressive. A form of ritual appointed by ecclesiastical authority has been translated and published from a document found in the charter-chest of an ancient Thuringian monastery, by M. Büsching, a well-known German antiquary. It will be familiar to many readers, from its being given by Sir Walter Scott in the historical Notes to his *Fair Maid of Perth*. It is here appended:—

A fire was kindled within the church, not far from the great altar. The person about to undergo the ordeal was placed in front of the fire, surrounded by his friends, by all who were in any way interested in the result of the trial, and by the whole clergy of the vicinity. Upon a table near the fire, the coulters over which he was to walk, the bar he was to carry, or, if he were a knight, the steel gloves which, after they had been made red hot, he was to put on his hands, were placed in view of all.

Part of the usual service of the day being performed, a priest advances, and places himself in front of the fire, uttering at the same moment, the following prayer, which is the first Mr. Büsching gives:—

"O Lord God, bless this place, that herein there may be health, and holiness, and purity, and sanctification, and victory, and humility, and meekness, fulfilment of the law, and obedience to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. May thy blessing, O God of purity and justice, be upon this place, and upon all that be therein; for the sake of Christ, the Redeemer of the world."

A second priest now lifts the iron, and bears it towards the fire. A series of prayers follows; all to be repeated ere the iron is laid on the fire.

These are the Prayers to be said over the Fire and the Iron.

"1. Lord God, Almighty Father, Fountain of Light, hear us:—enlighten us, O thou that dwellest in light unapproachable. Bless this fire, O God; and as from the midst of the fire thou didst of old enlighten Moses, so from this flame enlighten and purify our hearts, that we may be worthy, through Christ our Lord, to come unto thee, and unto the life eternal.

"2. Our Father which art in Heaven, &c.

"3. O Lord, save thy servant. Lord God, send him help out of Zion, thy holy hill. Save him, O Lord. Hear us, O Lord. O Lord, be with us.

"4. O God, Holy and Almighty, hear us. By the majesty of thy most holy name, and by the coming of thy dear Son, and by the gift of the comfort of thy holy Spirit, and by the justice of thine eternal seat, hear us, good Lord. Purify this metal, and sanctify it, that all falsehood and deceit of the devil may be cast out of it, and utterly removed; and that the truth of thy righteous judgment

may be opened and made manifest to all the faithful that cry unto thee this day, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The iron is now placed in the fire, and sprinkled with consecrated water both before and after it is so placed. The mass is said while the iron is heating,—the introductory scripture being,—“O Lord, thou art just, and righteous are all thy judgments.” The priest delivers the wafer to the person about to be tried, and, ere he communicates, the following prayer is said by the priest and congregation:—

“We pray unto thee, O God, that it may please thee to absolve this thy servant, and to clear him from his sins. Purify him, O heavenly Father, from all the stains of the flesh, and enable him, by thy all-covering and atoning grace, to pass through this fire,—thy creature—triumphantly, being justified in Christ our Lord.”

Then the Gospel:—“Then there came one unto Jesus, who fell upon his knees, and cried out, Good Master, what must I do that I may be saved? Jesus said, Why callest me good?” &c.

The chief priest, from the altar, now addresses the accused, who is still kneeling near the fire:—

“By the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and by the Christianity whose name thou bearest, and by the baptism in which thou wert born again, and by all the blessed relics of the saints of God that are preserved in this church, I conjure thee, Come not unto this altar, nor eat of this body of Christ, if thou beest guilty in the things that are laid to thy charge; but if thou beest innocent therein, come, brother, and come freely.”

The accused then comes forward and communicates,—the priest saying—“This day may the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which were given and shed for thee, be thy protection and thy succour, yea, even in the midst of the flame.”

The priest now reads this prayer:—“O Lord, it hath pleased thee to accept our spiritual sacrifice. May the joyful partaking in this holy sacrament be comfortable and useful to all that are here present, and serviceable to the removing of the bondage and thralldom of whatsoever sins do most easily beset us. Grant also, that to this thy servant it may be of exceeding comfort, gladdening his heart, until the truth of thy righteous judgment be revealed.”

The organ now peals, and *Kyrie Eleison* and the Litany are sung in full chorus.

After this comes another prayer:—

“O God! thou that through fire hath shown forth so many signs of thy almighty power! thou that didst snatch Abraham, thy servant, out of the brands and flames of the Chaldeans, wherein many were consumed! thou that didst cause the bush to burn before the eyes of Moses, and yet not to be consumed! God, that didst send thy Holy Spirit, in the likeness of tongues of fiery flame, to the end that thy faithful servants might be visited and set apart from the unbelieving generation; God, that didst safely conduct the three children through the flame of the Babylonians; God, that didst waste Sodom with fire from Heaven, and preserve Lot, thy servant, as a sign and a token of thy mercy: O God, show forth yet once again thy visible power, and the majesty of thy unerring judgment; that truth may be made manifest, and falsehood avenged, make thou this fire thy minister before us; powerless be it where is the power of purity, but sorely burning, even to the flesh and the sinews, the hand that hath done evil, and that hath not feared to be lifted up in false swearing. O God, from whose eye nothing can be concealed make thou this fire thy voice to us thy servants, that it may reveal innocence, or cover iniquity with shame. Judge of all the earth! hear us: good Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son.”

The priest now dashes once more the holy water over the fire, saying, “Upon this fire be the blessing of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that it may be a sign to us of the righteous judgment of God.”

The priest pauses, instantly the accused approaches to the fire, and lifts the iron, which he carries nine yards from the flame. The moment he lays it down he is surrounded by the priests, and borne by them into the vestry; there his hands are wrapped in linen cloths, sealed down with the signet of the Church;

these are removed on the third day, when he is declared innocent or guilty according to the condition in which his hands are found. "*Si sinus rubescens in vestigio ferri reperiatur, culpabilis ducatur. Sin autem mundus reperiatur, Laus Deo referatur.*"

Of course it has been said that all this was fraud, trick, priestcraft; that chemical agencies were applied to protect the body from the natural effects of fire,—that some liniment was used to anoint the soles of the feet,—that asbestos was mixed with a composition to cover the skin,—that the hands were protected by asbestos gloves, so made as to imitate the skin. But this is all pure supposition; there is no evidence to support it; it is simple conjecture as to how it is supposed these things *might* have been done, not evidence as to how they really *were* done. To prevent the defendant from preparing his hands by art, and in order to ascertain the result of the ordeal, his hands were covered up and sealed during the three days which preceded and followed the fiery application; and it is an entirely gratuitous conjecture of Beckman's that those in whose care the accused was placed made use of these opportunities to apply preventives to those whom they wished to acquit, and to bring back the hands to their natural condition. Even were the clergy, generally, base enough, and impious enough, to resort to these juggling tricks, and blasphemously appeal to heaven with a lie in their mouths, and with the consciousness of so monstrous a fraud, this could scarcely have been done without the connivance of magistrates and civil rulers, who were not always well-disposed to the Church, but not unfrequently looked upon the ecclesiastical authorities with a jealous eye. We know how hard it is for even a handful of conspirators to be faithful to each other, even for a short time; how comes it, then, that in a conspiracy so vast, organised into an institution, having its ramifications in so many countries, and extending over so great a period of time, no one blabbed the secret, no one betrayed his fellow-conspirators? * If the priests possessed a knowledge of the arts imputed to them, they certainly kept their secrets wonderfully well; and, especially when we consider that the accused was "surrounded by all who were in any way interested in the result of the trial," their contemporaries must have been singularly dull of sense and dull of wit not to have detected their frauds, leaving the discovery to the *conjectures* of their enlightened posterity. The truth is that these conjectures are mere guesses

* It is said that Albertus Magnus, in the thirteenth century, soon after the ordeal had fallen into general desuetude in Europe, gave a recipe for a kind of paste, of which asbestos was an ingredient, to protect the skin from the effects of fire; and which is affirmed to have been used by ecclesiastics in the ordeal. This, I believe, is the only thing of the kind that is alleged; and the recipe is confessedly of doubtful authenticity.

invented to meet the exigencies of theory, and to evade the inference felt to be otherwise inevitable, that these things could only take place by the intervention of some spiritual power, operating by some higher than merely physical laws. Leaving, however, the "dark ages" (so called, I suppose, among other reasons, because we are very much in the dark about them), and coming nearer to our own—to the beginning of the eighteenth century; and turning from the records of "benighted Catholics," to Protestant history, we come upon a very striking episode in illustration of our subject.

Most of our readers are acquainted with the history of the Protestants of the Cevennes, and the events of that history which, so wonderfully manifest a protecting and spiritual power, and which are so well attested by contemporaries. One of the books written at the time is entitled *Le Theatre Sacré des Cevennes*, and is translated into English under the title of *A Cry from the Desert; or, Testimonials of the Miraculous Things lately come to pass in the Cevennes; with a Preface by John Lacy, Esq., London, 1707*. Beside quotations from contemporary works of repute, this book contains "the testimonies in form of twenty-six eye and ear-witnesses, now or lately resident in London." Twelve of these "did on the sixth of March, and the first of April last (1706), affirm their Depositions upon Oath, before John Edisbury, Esq., and Sir Richard Halford, Masters in Chancery." One of the Depositions is that of Durand Fage, one of the leaders of the Cevennois; and an eye-witness of the following scene, which I quote from his sworn Deposition:—

Cavallier having called a religious assembly near the tile-kiln of Serignan, betwixt Quisac and Somiere, on Sunday in August 1703, at about three in the afternoon, brother Clary, who was of our troop, a young man of about eight-and-twenty, who had care of the provisions, fell into an ecstasy. He declared that there were two persons in the assembly who came thither to betray us, and that if they did not repent of their design, he himself would discover them in the name of God. At these words, Cavallier, not questioning the truth of the inspiration, ordered about 600 soldiers to surround the congregation, and to suffer no one to depart. Clary continuing under inspiration, strongly agitated, his eyes closed, and his hands lifted up, immediately walked forward, and laid his hands on one of the traitors. The other, seeing his accomplice thus miraculously discovered, threw himself at the feet of Cavallier, confessing the guilt of them both, and imploring pardon. Cavallier ordered them to be bound and reserved for the judgment of the assembly: but Clary, still in ecstasy, cried aloud that there were some present who suspected an understanding betwixt him and the two seized: therefore, God would manifest his own power, and confound their disbelief. At that instant his agitation became greater than ever, and he cried out, in the spirit—: "Oh! people of little faith, do ye doubt my power, after all the wonders I have shown you? I tell thee, my child, that I will display my power and my truth. I command that fire be lighted, and that thou place thyself in the midst of it. Fear not, for the flame shall not touch thee."

When these words were heard, there was a loud outcry of those who had doubted, begging pardon, and declaring themselves satisfied: praying God to spare the trial by fire, for they acknowledged that He knew their hearts. But Cavallier ordered the fire to be made. I was one of those who fetched wood for

it, and the branches being dry, for they had been collected for the use of the tile-kiln, the pile mingled with larger boughs was raised in the midst of the assembly. The fire was lighted, whether by himself or not I do not know, but *when the flame began to mount, he went into the midst of it*, and stood with his hands elevated, clasped together, and still in ecstasy. Clary had on a white blouse, which his wife had brought him that morning, and he went on speaking amongst the flames, though what he said could not be understood, for besides the assembly, which consisted of five or six hundred people, the circle was surrounded by the six hundred men under arms, and all were on their knees, weeping passionately, praying, singing psalms, and crying, "Pardon! Mercy!" The fire was made in a low spot, so that all round on the hill sides could see it, Clary in the midst of it, and *the flames meeting above his head*. The wife of Clary was near the fire in an agony of terror, and praying vehemently to God. I stood at her side supporting her, and encouraging her all that I could. There were near her also two of her sisters, her father, one of her brothers, and several of the relatives of Clary. Those who collected the wood also thrust the scattered branches into the fire, till the whole was consumed; Clary, *at the end of about a quarter-of-an-hour, walked out of the burning cinders, still under inspiration, but wholly untouched by the fire*. His friends rushed to embrace him, and to congratulate him on that wondrous proof of his faith. I was one of the first to embrace him. *I examined his white blouse, and it was not in the least injured in the fire, nor was his hair singed*. His wife and relations were in transports of joy, praising God. Cavallier ordered a general prayer and thanksgiving for this great miracle, which God had vouchsafed to confirm the faith and courage of his servants.

The affidavit of John Cavallier, who was also present, confirms this account of Fage in every particular. Nor was this the only instance of the kind.

To confound the murmurers, who had let in doubts of their chief, Cavallier, when two thousand of the Camisars were praying in the open air at Calvisson, ordered a great pile of vine and olive branches to be made. A young woman, accompanied by two young prophets, who exhorted her to have faith in God, approached it. She fell on her knees, and prayed with ever-augmenting fervour that God would confer on her exemption from the power of fire. She commanded the whole multitude to kneel, menacing with the wrath of God all who refused to prostrate themselves before His glory, which He was about to reveal in wonders. She then arose, entered the flaming pile, walked through it, returned, entered, and re-entered again three times. The multitude bursting into tears, cried aloud in admiration of the marvels of God. Silence being re-established, she fell on her knees, and prayed that she might be permitted to take fire in her hands as if it were water, and that instead of burning, it should refresh her. She arose, took coals of fire in her hands, held them, and then casting them back, followed by the two prophets, she retired into the crowd rejoicing and blessing God.

These facts, however well established, are very astounding; and it may be asked, have we any facts analogous to them in modern experience—any facts vouched for by living witnesses whose testimony is worthy of credit? I answer, that we have; and I proceed to cite a few of them.

In the *Sacred Circle*, published in New York, 1855, and edited by Judge Edmonds, Dr. Dexter, and Mr. O. G. Warren, the latter gentleman at page 120, Vol. i., writes as follows:—

In the Old and New Testaments there are many miracles recorded. Some of them can be explained, and others not. A recent event offers a solution of one of these. Certain servants of the Lord were thrown into a fiery furnace heated to an extraordinary degree; but they were not burned; and there was

not even the smell of fire upon them. Something of a similar nature has lately occurred. A medium had been ordered by a spirit to *thrust his hand into a flame of hot fire*. He did so, at first with some natural hesitation, but finally held his hand in it for a considerable time without injury. *This was many times repeated, and the hand was not burned in the least.*

This miracle—and there have been several such—was explained by the spirits, as far as it could be explained. They alleged that they were able to envelope him (the medium) in an atmosphere that would resist the action of fire.

In the same volume, page 217, Judge Edmonds writes:—

I know that not long ago a medium was made to hold his hand in a flame a considerable time—long enough to have destroyed it—and yet it was not injured; and a second time was the act repeated and the hand was uninjured.

The following is taken from the *Spiritual Telegraph Papers*, vol. vi., published by Partridge & Brittan, New York, 1857:—

At the New York Conference, Mr. D. G. Taylor, a highly respected citizen of New York, related that at a circle held in his house in West 16th Street, ten persons being present, amongst them, Mr. C—, Mr. G—d, and Mrs. H. Robinson, then seated in the audience,—his son, a well-known medium, had during entrancement *held his hand in the flame of a candle during the space of 70 seconds, and that the hand was removed wholly unscorched.* On another occasion, at their weekly circle, the same medium and another (Miss M—) being both deeply entranced, were desired by the spirits to place each a hand at the top of the blazing fire, and retain them there, whilst the circle counted 50. They did so, and removed their hands wholly unscorched. Neither of the mediums recollected the act when awakened from the trance.

The same volume relates the following facts; they are given on the authority of Mrs. Emma Hardinge (the well-known inspirational speaker), now in London, and who has personally assured me of their truth:—

In Macon, Georgia, a coloured girl, who was an excellent physical medium, frequently exhibited the feat of thrusting her hand amongst the blazing pine logs, and removing it after some 60 seconds without the least injury. She always insisted, however, that she would only perform this feat when "Cousin Joe," whom she called her guardian spirit, was present and bid her do it.

At New Orleans, Louisiana, a negro by the name of Tom Jenkins, was well-known for his power of resisting fire under what he called the "fluence of Big Ben," a boatman formerly on the Mississippi river, and who since his death by drowning had come and made what Tom called "magic" for him. On one occasion Mrs. Emma Hardinge and a party of friends paying a visit to Tom he became entranced, took off his shoes and stockings, rolled up his pantaloons to the knees, and *entered the pine-wood fire, literally standing in it as it blazed upon the hearth*, long enough to repeat in a solemn and impressive manner the 23rd, 24th, and 25th verses of the 3rd chapter of Daniel..

The following incident is extracted from the *Christian Spiritualist* of 1860, published at Macon, Georgia:—

Mrs. Lovejoy, of Cincinnati, being on a visit to this place, brought with her a baby of four months' old, who is a remarkable medium. We have been accustomed to sit around the cradle whilst the little baby lies asleep, ever since she has been here, and always receive satisfactory responses from our spirit friends, either by raps or rockings of the cradle. If the baby wakes during our circle, she never cries, but seems, by the happy smile over her sweet face, and the delight with which she crows along with the raps, to receive some pleasant influence from the power which is operating.

Last evening (April 3rd), as we were holding a circle round the cradle, I asked the spirits, why the Christians did not give the signs which are promised to the *believers* in the last chapter of St. Mark? When the spirits

rapped out, by the alphabet—"Because the Christians of this century were believers with their lips, but too many of their hearts were far from God." They added—"They would shew what belief in the truth of Scripture meant, through that baby, to-morrow, and prove that it was something more than lip service."

The next day (this morning), as I returned to dinner, I found my wife and Mrs. Lovejoy sitting in the verandah outside the house. They rose up and went into the parlour with me, also accompanied by Mr. Newman, my overseer, from Mississippi, who was along with me.

On entering the parlour, we were all four horrified to behold the baby's cradle literally a mass of flames; a spark from the pine fire, probably, had flown out, and the cradle being incautiously left near the open fireplace, had taken fire, and was now wrapped in flames. I shall never forget the shrieks of the women, or my own feelings of horror at the sight; but Mr. Newman gallantly rushed towards the blazing mass, and, plunging his hands in, snatched the infant from the cradle, and rolled it in its blazing night dress on the matting of the floor, until the fire was extinguished. I seized a bucket of water at the door, brought by Sam for our horses, and hurled it at the cradle, by which the flames were soon put out; but the strange part of the story is, that the little one never cried, nor even whimpered, and that, *though its night dress was burned to a cinder, not a single scorch can be found on its body, nor the least token of injury; even the bit of hair on its little bare poll is not singed.*

Mrs. Lovejoy is now in bed, attended by my wife, in a painful condition of hysterical emotion; but the little angel—guarded sign of true Christianity—is merrily crowing in the arms of her nurse, Cherry, on the floor, at my feet, as I write.

E. HOFFMANN.

Mobile, April 4th, 1860.

These things were done in America. Let us come nearer home. The event I am about to relate took place in the Winter of 1860, at the house of a gentleman, in the neighbourhood of Hyde Park, and in presence of several persons whose names we have for reference if need be.

There had been some conversation relative to the narrative. I have already quoted in the third chapter of Daniel. Mr. Home was entranced, and the spirit speaking through him rebuked the incredulity which had been expressed, Mr. Home at the same time, *in sight of all, laying his head on the burning coals, where it remained several moments, he sustaining no injury; not a hair of his head was singed.*

Still more recently, and to bring up our chain of testimony to this year of grace, 1868, a gentleman writing under the signature of "Honestas" communicated to a contemporary some experiences of Mr. Home's mediumship he had recently witnessed at his own house. Among other facts related by him in *Human Nature*, February, 1868, is the following:—

The four friends had now rejoined us. Movements of the table and loud raps at once occurred—Mr. Home falling off into a trance almost immediately. In his trance state, he delivered a very beautiful address, too long to be copied; then passing up to the hearth, placed his hands and then his face in the flames, and on the burning coals. *This fire test I have witnessed several times*, and particularly call attention to it, as its interest is increased if we but look back to the records of religious persecutions of past ages. On this evening, I had the amplest opportunity of watching the exact movements, and quite satisfied myself of the fact that Mr. Home touched the burning coals. A lady present unable to resist her expressions of alarm as his face neared and closed

upon the flames was reproved—Mr. Home extending his right hand towards her, and which had now become white and luminous, in reproachful warning, saying “Have you no faith, no faith? Daniel will take no harm.”

As “Honestas” had recently communicated a very remarkable phenomenon of a different kind in connection with Mr. Home of which he was an eye-witness,* and as he was known to us as a gentleman of intelligence and veracity, we at once wrote to him to furnish us a fuller account of this fire-test than that given in *Human Nature*, and he has favoured us with the following reply:—

“Sir,—I have been requested to give a minute account of the phenomenon of contact with fire, or ‘Fire Test,’ Mr. Home submitted himself to, whilst in a trance state; a partial description I have already given in *Human Nature*; and at first I thought it would be best to supply you with a transcript of the narrative I have already rendered, but on reperusal of my original notes, I find I had greatly pruned down the statement of accompanying circumstances, and as I am desired to be very minute, I will, as far as I can safely do so, transcribe from the original manuscripts.

“The evening on which the phenomenon I am about to relate occurred, had been full of interest, several very remarkable manifestations having taken place, such as the absorption of water by an unseen agency, and the retention of water in an open-necked bottle, though the same was *inverted*, and violently moved and swung about. Mr. Home who was all the time in a deep trance, now poured several drops of water upon his finger points, and I noticed a slight jet of steam rise, hissing from the ends of his fingers, and accompanied by flames of electric light or odic of a violet bluish colour, half an inch to an inch in length; much resembling the drawings given in Reichenbach’s Works. Still continuing in a trance, Mr. Home now approached the fire, and, kneeling down before the hearth, proceeded to explain how great the power of spiritual beings was over matter, not because they worked miracles, but from their superior chemical knowledge,—adding: ‘We gladly have shewn you our power over fluids, our power over solids is as great. Now see how I handle burning coal;’ then laying hold of the burning back of coal in the hearth with his hands, he deliberately broke it asunder, and, *taking a large lump of incandescent coal into the palm of his hand* (the size of an orange), Mr. Home arose and walked up to Mrs. —, whose alarm at what she was witnessing had quite unbalanced her. *I examined his hand and wrist*; the heat was so intense that it struck through the back of his hand, all but scorching his wristband, and Mr. Home then address-

* “New Spirit Manifestations,” present Volume, p. 30.

ing Mrs. —, said, 'That is a burning coal, A——; it is a burning coal; feel the heat of his hand. A burning coal will not hurt Daniel!—have faith!' *I closely examined his hand and by the light of the glowing coal I could trace every line in the palm of the hand.* The skin was not, as will be surmised covered by a glove, or steeped in a solution of alum, it was as clean as soap and water could make it. Mr. Home now explained that spiritual beings had the power of abstracting heat as a distinctive element, and to prove this he said, now mark:—

" 'We will cool it now—draw out the heat.' My doubts were by this time thoroughly aroused; I closely watched the process. On laying hold of the coal, which had become black, I found it to be comparatively cooled, and, taking it from his hand, I examined it carefully, so also the skin of his hand. At his request, I returned the coal into the palm of his hand; almost instantaneously, the heat returned; not to incandescence, only the caloric; on applying my hand to the coal, I burnt myself, and took conviction at the cost of a slight injury. I cannot say I doubted any more. The scrutiny I had submitted the hand of Mr. Home to precluded this; but, desirous of making certain of the fact of an unprotected surface of the hand of the medium being 'fire proof,' I took Mr. Home's hand, rubbed it, moistened it; not a trace of any foreign matter, and, strange enough, no smell of smoke, or the burnt smell of fire observable. Mr. Home, who was still in a trance, smiled good-temperedly at my persevering efforts to undo my own conviction. He then again addressed us. 'What we are doing, are not miracles; the cure of A—— was no miracle; we only carried away some dyke in her nervous system, and set the functions free. . We hope to do so for H——. We repeat, in truth, we perform no miracles; no raising of the dead; we watch our opportunity, and bring back the spirit to the body. All comes from our loving Father. Our power of faith is the test; whether miracles are true or not, faith is necessary.' Then addressing Mrs. —, 'Will you have faith now? The last time Daniel neared the fire, you lacked faith.'

"Mr. Home then resumed his seat, and proceeded to experimentalise on two decanters of water he had placed on the table in the early part of the evening, but my space will not allow me to detail the phenomena which then followed.

"On another evening, Mr. Home, after he had shown us some truly remarkable phenomena, all whilst in a trance, knelt down before the hearth, deliberately arranging the bed of burning coal with his hands, he commenced fanning away the flames; then to our horror and amazement *placed his face and head in the flames*, which appeared to form a bed, upon which

his face rested. I narrowly watched the phenomenon, and could see the flames touch his hair. On withdrawing his face from the flames, *I at once examined his hair; not a fibre burnt or scorched*—unscathed he came out from the fire test,—a true medium.

“ I am aware that great incredulity will reward my narrative : I give what I have seen as a fact, refraining from explanation.

“ That the fire test has played its part in the records of every race of people, the veriest tyro in history knows. Fire test was the crucial test of religious fanatics, whose unreasoning orthodoxy sought strength by imitating the wondrous phenomenon I have just been recording. How full of interest the inquiry into the history of the ‘ Fire-ordeal,’ ‘ Fire-test,’ ‘ Fever-probe,’ becomes when viewed by the light of a fact fresh before us ; and I only hope Mr. Brevior will take up the thread and unravel the mystery of the once terrible fire-test, which haunts the path of the historian as he travels back into the past of the human race.

HONESTAS.

“ March, 1868.”

Thus then, the credibility of the narratives we have quoted from the Hebrew Scriptures is confirmed by, and they in turn confirm, the similar narratives which we find in various countries and centuries even to our own. Their range is too extensive, many of them are too circumstantial and well attested ; the testimony to the facts is too clear, too independent and concurrent, to permit us to assign them wholly to imposture. Make what large and liberal abatement you will for fraud on the one hand, and credulity on the other, you cannot altogether dispose of the question in that way ; and any attempt to do so can only be fitly characterised as itself an experiment on the credulity of mankind.

It is well known to Magnetists that there are certain magnetic states in which the body becomes insensible, even to the action of fire. St. Augustine (*De Civit. Dei*, L. xiv., c. 24,) relates a case in which this state could even be self-induced. He gives an account of one Restitius, a Presbyter, who could at pleasure deprive himself of all sense in a state of apparent death, in which he seemed not to breathe, and was not affected by any present sensations, even from fire. The same state may arise spontaneously, as well as from magnetisation. Baker (*Baker's Chron.* page 428) speaks of a William Foxley, who fell asleep on Tuesday in Easter-week, and could not be awakened even with pinching and burning, till the first day of next term, which was full fourteen days. I need not give instances of insensibility under mesmeric influence, as this is a matter which no one conversant with the facts of Mesmerism will dispute ; but I

would suggest that spirits may preserve from the effects of fire not only by some chemical or other action on the fire, flame, or burning substance, (as in the way explained in the letter of "Honestas,") but also by magnetic or other operation affecting the body to which the fire is to be applied; probably by magnetising the body in the same way as that with which we are so familiar, or by some similar method; or by surrounding it with a spiritual atmosphere impervious to the fire; as alleged by the spirits in the case quoted from Mr. Warren.

If our so-called philosophers were really so in the old and true sense of the word;—if instead of being merely "physicists," they were single-minded seekers after wisdom,—indifferent to fame, heedless of prejudice and clamour, fearless of reproach, resolved at any cost to buy the truth and sell it not; they would eagerly seek for the evidence which in the present time is being given to the truth of these facts, they would study these facts and the laws which govern them that they might carry out the true ends of philosophy;—to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, to give us a deeper insight into the mysteries of being, and especially to enable us to comprehend more clearly and fully the properties and mutual relations of matter and spirit.

T. S.

THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS AND MR. FAY.

It is nearly four years since the Davenports first arrived in London, accompanied by the Rev. J. B. Ferguson, a gentleman whose great intelligence and kindly manners secured him the respect of all who had the pleasure of making his personal acquaintance. I believe I was the first person, in England, who privately witnessed the Davenport manifestations, and I afterwards arranged the two first *séances* given to a number of City gentlemen, at the Hanover Square Rooms, in September, 1864, when I added "my testimony to the undoubted genuineness" of the whole exhibition.* Since that period the career of the Davenports (in which it must be understood that Mr. William Fay has borne an important and most useful part) has been an extraordinary and chequered one.

The shameful conduct of the Press of this country towards these young Americans will, doubtless, be fresh in the recollection of every one. But, supported by the conscious integrity of their remarkable medium powers, they have boldly held their

* See *Spiritual Magazine*, Vol.:V., p.469.

own, and after a most successful tour of nearly three years through Continental Europe, they have returned to London to challenge once more, before their departure for America, public investigation and criticism; and upon their re-appearance at the Hanover Square Rooms, on the 11th. of April last, they were received in the most flattering manner by a crowded and enthusiastic audience. I was present at this *séance*, and it will be sufficient to say that the Davenports' mediumistic powers are not diminished, but, if possible, they are increased; especially in the cabinet exhibition, where hands, life-like in form and texture, were frequently seen before the doors were closed, and where, from the aperture, there were protruded at one time, two long naked femininely-formed arms, and also a group of not less than five hands of various sizes at the same instant.

I have obtained from Mr. William Fay some particulars of their receptions in the principal cities of the Continent; and it appears that, from various causes, these have been unequal, and in some instances unsuccessful, but upon the whole highly satisfactory. From the decided opinions of some persons, who said they could not succeed in Russia, they hesitated at first to visit that country, but the result, contrary to their expectations, proved a great success. They were at once received by the Emperor, and gave their first *séance* to him and the members of the imperial family, the Crown Prince being the one selected to sit with the Brothers in the cabinet.

The unqualified approval of the Czar was their best passport to the patronage of the nobility and aristocracy of St. Petersburg, before whom alone the Davenports exhibited; the high charges made in that city for their public and private *séances* tending to exclude all below a certain rank. Among some of the noble families to whom private *séances* were given were the Prince Constantine, Count Koucheleff, Prince Paskawick, the French Ambassador, the American Ambassador and many others; 38 in all. At their first public *séance* in St. Petersburg, the receipts amounted to the very large sum of £900.

As I may not have the opportunity of again speaking of the Davenports and Mr. Fay in this Magazine, I desire to convey to those of my friends in America, who introduced them to me, the assurance of my conviction that the Brothers' mission to Europe has been of great service to Spiritualism; that their public conduct as mediums—in which relation I alone know them—has been steady and unexceptionable, and that though certain developments may have taken place in America since their departure, which, in some few instances, appear to surpass the manifestations obtained through the Davenports, none can

be more convincing—none, that I am aware of, so well adapted for a large audience. As I had the responsibility of first endorsing the reality and wonderful character of the phenomena produced through the agency of the Davenports and Mr. William Fay in England, so it becomes a duty for me to say now, that I have had no reason whatever to change my opinion of the genuine and marvellous character of their mediumship, which is entirely free from the imputation of trickery and bad faith of any kind.

BENJ. COLEMAN.

WHAT IS THE TALMUD?

WE must confess we could not have given any sensible answer to the question until the appearance of the article in the October number of the *Quarterly Review*. We propose to make a few short extracts from this article to show some of the characteristics of this wonderful and unique book of the ancient Jews. The writer alludes to portions of the book which would be of special interest to us, but unfortunately only in a way which does not enable us to show the Spiritualistic notions and phenomena which are recorded in it. For these we must wait for another historian. He says:—

“ Apart from the difficulties of explaining a work so utterly Eastern, antique, and thoroughly *sui generis*, to our modern Western readers, in the space of a few pages, we labour under the farther disability of not being able to refer to the work itself. Would it not indeed be mere affectation to presuppose more than the vaguest acquaintance with its language or even its name in many of our readers? And while we would fain enlarge upon such points as a comparison between the law laid down in it with ours, or with the contemporary Greek, Roman, and Persian laws, or those of Islam, or even with its own fundamental code, the Mosaic; while we would trace a number of its ethical, ceremonial, and doctrinal points in Zoroastrianism, in Christianity, in Mohammedanism; a vast deal of its metaphysics and philosophy in Plato, Aristotle, the Pythagoreans, the Neoplatonists, and the Gnostics—not to mention Spinoza and the Schellings of our own day; much of its medicine in Hippocrates and Galen, and the Paracelsus of but a few centuries ago—we shall scarcely be able to do more than to lay a few *dissecta membra* of these things before our readers. We cannot even sketch, in all its bearings, that singular mental movement which caused the best

spirits of an entire nation to concentrate, in spite of opposition, all their energies for a thousand years upon the writing, and for another thousand years upon the commenting, of this one book. Omitting all detail which it has cost much to gather, and more to suppress, we shall merely tell of its development, of the schools in which it grew, of the tribunals which judged by it, of some of the men that set their seal on it. We shall also introduce a summary of its law, speak of its metaphysics, of its moral philosophy, and quote many of its proverbs and saws—the truest of all gauges of a time.”

We must refer our readers to the article itself for the performance of this, in all but the quotation of a few of the wise sayings which we find scattered broadcast through its pages:—

“Jerusalem was destroyed because the instruction of the young was neglected.”

“The world is only saved by the breath of the school children.”

“Even for the rebuilding of the Temple the schools must not be interrupted.”

“Study is more meritorious than sacrifice—a scholar is greater than a prophet.”

“You should revere the teacher even more than your Father. The latter only brought you into this world, the former indicates the way into the next. But blessed is the son who has learnt from his father: he shall revere him both as his father and his master; and blessed is the father who has instructed his son.”

“Greater is he who derives his livelihood from work than he who fears God.”

“Six hundred and thirteen injunctions was Moses instructed to give to the people. David reduced them all to eleven, in the fifteenth psalm: ‘Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle, who shall dwell on Thy holy hill?—he that walketh uprightly,’ &c. The Prophet Isaiah reduced them to six (xxxiii. 15): ‘He that walketh righteously,’ &c. The Prophet Micah reduced them to three (vi. 8): ‘What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?’ Isaiah once more reduced them to two (lvi. 1): ‘Keep ye judgment and do justice.’ Amos (v. 4) reduced them all to one: ‘Seek ye me and ye shall live.’ But lest it might be supposed from this that God would be found in the fulfilment of his whole law only, Habakkuk said (ii. 4): ‘The just shall live by his faith.’”

“The real and only (good) Pharisee is he who does the will of his Father which is in Heaven *because he loves Him.*”

“Even for the sake of the tiniest babe the Sabbath must

be broken, without hesitating, for the babe will keep many a Sabbath yet for that one that was broken for it."

"Do not believe in thyself till the day of thy death."

"Do not judge thy neighbour until thou hast stood in his place."

"Whosoever does not increase in knowledge decreases."

"Do not unto another what thou wouldst not have another do unto thee. This is the whole law, the rest is mere commentary."

"Be equally conscientious in small as in great precepts for ye know not their individual rewards."

"The laws has been given to man, and not to angels. The Scripture says he shall live by them; that means he shall not die through them. They shall not be made pitfalls or burdens to him, that shall make him hate life."

"As God fills the whole universe, so the soul fills the whole body; as God sees and is not seen, so the soul sees and is not seen; as God nourishes the whole universe, so the soul nourishes the whole body; as God is pure, so the soul is pure."

"There is no death without individual sin!"

"One hour of repentance is better than the whole world to come."

"This world is like a roadside inn, but the world to come is like the real home."

"For the righteous there is no rest, neither in this world, nor in the next, for they go from host to host; from striving to striving, they will see God in Zion."

"Generations upon generations shall last the damnation of idolators, apostates, and traitors, but there is a space of only two fingers' breadth between Hell and Heaven—the sinner has but to repent sincerely, and the gates to everlasting bliss will spring open. No human being is excluded from the world to come."

"Who is strong? He who subdues his passion. Who is rich? He who is satisfied with his lot."

"Repent one day before thy death. Repent to-day lest to-morrow thou might be summoned."

"The aim and end of all wisdom are repentance and good works."

"Even the most righteous shall not attain to so high a place in Heaven as the truly repentant."

"Love your wife like yourself. Honour her more than yourself."

"Whoever lives unmarried, lives without joy, without comfort, without blessing."

"It is woman alone through whom God's blessings are vouchsafed to a house."

“ He who marries for money, his children shall be a curse to him.”

“ He who gives charity in secret is greater than Moses himself.”

“ Let the honour of thy neighbour be to thee like thy own.”

“ Thy friend has a friend, and thy friend's friend has a friend. Be discreet.”

“ If there is anything bad about you, say it yourself.”

“ It is a good sign in man to be capable of being ashamed.”

“ Do not live near a pious fool.”

“ The heart of our first ancestors was as large as the largest gate of the Temple; that of the latter ones, like that of the next large one; ours is like the eye of a needle.”

“ Drink not and you will not sin.”

“ Whosoever runs after greatness, greatness runs away from him; he who runs from greatness, greatness follows him.”

“ Commit a sin twice and you will think it perfectly allowable.”

“ When the end of a man is come, every one lords it over him.”

“ Teach thy tongue to say, I do not know.”

THE PHILOSOPHICAL DIFFICULTY:

ADDRESS OF MR. J. W. JACKSON, TO THE SPIRITUALISTS
OF GLASGOW.

THE remarks which we have here to make may constitute a fitting *pendant* to the article on the French Mogalists. Mr. Jackson, the author of *Ecstasies of Genius*, and of various lectures on mesmerism, has long, like other magnetists, found a great difficulty in accepting the phenomena called spiritual as actually proceeding from spirits. Some years ago a friend of ours, on reading Mr. Jackson's mesmeric publications, told him that he saw exactly where he was—that he was on the staircase leading to the chambers of Spiritualism, but had not reached the rooms for which the staircase was built. Mr. Jackson is on the staircase still, and, to all appearance, likely to remain there. In an address delivered some time ago to the Glasgow Spiritualists, he assured them that he fully admitted the reality of the phenomena which they attributed to spiritual influence, but that he

was quite satisfied himself that spirits had nothing whatever to do with them. In this assurance we are persuaded that Mr. Jackson is perfectly sincere; and, still more, that he cannot possibly come to any other conclusion. It is the result of the pre-occupation of his brain with lucid magnetic theories, from which he can no more escape than the bird that is once enclosed in the net of the fowler. That he will ever persuade a single Spiritualist, however, to adopt his convictions, we cannot encourage him to hope. Louis Büchree, in his *Natur und Geist*, and *Kraft und Stoff*, and Carus Sterne, in his *Naturgeschichte*, have gone over the whole of his ground most elaborately and ably, but with the discouraging result of convincing nobody who had come to the examination of these phenomena with a mind free from professional theories. Without, however, wishing to tax Mr. Jackson with any unusual enormity of personal conceit, it must strike others, though it may fail to strike himself, as rather self-complacent to suppose that of all the twenty millions of persons of all ranks, countries, characters and acquirements, who have carefully studied these phenomena, he is the only one who has been endowed with acumen sufficient to penetrate into their real nature. Many men eminent for their habits of metaphysical research—many men of profound science—have tested the character of these phenomena, and have been compelled to adopt the spiritual theory as the only one capable of explaining them. Professor Hare, of America, entered on this inquiry with as strong a persuasion as any man has ever entertained that he should rout the spiritual theory altogether. As a man of practical science, a profound electrician, and an avowed disbeliever in revelation, he entered on the inquiry with the utmost care, and pursued it with the utmost pertinacity for two years, but he came out of it a firm believer in the spiritual agency—concurred in the manifestations, and a thorough Christian. Judge Edmonds, as a lawyer, went through the same laborious inquiry with the same result. Professor Mapes and Dr. Gray, of America, are also examples of philosophers as accomplished and as practical as those who are likely to follow in the same track. If philosophers, as Mr. Jackson affirms, be the only men capable of unravelling the mystery of these phenomena, here we have a number of them, and their decision is adverse to his position.

Mr. Jackson in a stately and *ex cathedra* style assures us that in his opinion physical laws will explain the whole of the phenomena. That such laws and others yet little known are at work in these matters, every one knows; but it seems to us to require very little acquaintance with these things to perceive that the laws which operate in them are conjointly resident in

spirits incarnate and spirits de-carnated. Mr. Jackson refers to the great fact that the intelligences involved in these phenomena have uniformly asserted that they are individual and actual spirits, and not mere laws and forces; have asserted this in every country and to every class of people; and he thinks he has an answer to this rather strong fact. In all ages and countries, he says, communications professing to proceed from spirits, have reflected the creeds and opinions of those to whom they came. Pagans, Greek and Roman philosophers, Buddhists, Brahmists, Chinese followers of Fohi and Lootse, Christian, Catholic and Protestant, all here received communications in accordance with their own beliefs. Nay, mythologic gods have appeared to mythologists; the Virgin Mary and Catholic saints to Catholics. Mr. Jackson's conclusion, therefore, is, that all these communications and apparitions are the objective results of the subjective powers, and spirits of those who indulge in these occult practices and speculations.

The fact is correct and historical; but the explanation, in our opinion, comes from a very different quarter. It is, and therefore ought to be satisfactory to Mr. Jackson, the result of a fixed law,—“like draws to like.” Beyond this, we know enough now to understand that spirits carry with them into the other world the views, opinions, habits, creeds, prejudices and self-wills which had taken possession of them here. The immense hosts of spirits “gone before” are always anxious to perpetuate their peculiar faiths and opinions amongst their successors on earth, and spare no pains or disguises to effect this. To the old Greeks and Romans they came in the shape of their gods; they delivered oracles to them as their gods; to the Roman Catholics they came as the Holy Mother, and as saints and saintesses. To those who think themselves philosophical they still come as Socrates, Bacon, Shakspeare, Franklin and the like, though with very little evidence of the intellect or genius of those great souls. As the Romans believed at the battle of Cannæ, their soldiers and those of the Carthagenians still continued the conflict in the air after they were slain; and as the hosts of Attila, in the battle of the Huns were said to do also; we believe and have no doubt, that every species of departed spirit, and that in hosts and countless battalions, are still zealously infusing their own views, and the views of their partizanships, with the minds of their successors on earth, and endeavouring to rule here still, and thus stir up the worst passions and practices of this afflicted world.

Now, though the forces operating in these phenomena, profess themselves to belong to different churches and religions, different creeds and philosophies, they all agree in one point,

namely :—That they are individual spirits, and not mere forces, or laws physical or spiritual. Their evidence regarding this fact is clear, uniform, and persistent; and for this universal and unvarying expression there must be a cause, and that cause cannot be a lie. Why should mere laws, physical or spiritual, be lies? How can they be lies if they are laws and forces impressed upon the living cosmos by its Creator? Mr. Jackson, on reflection, must perceive the dilemma into which his theory has led him. And let him for a moment suppose that these powers, whatever they be, had as uniformly, as clearly and persistently declared themselves to be merely laws and forces. Suppose, in fact, that they had declared themselves unvowingly on the side of the philosopher? Does he not see with what an Io Pean of triumph they would have been received? With what a clamour and hubbub of intensified delight the philosopher would have avowed all attempts to declare them not laws and forces, but spirits? What impudence it would have been declared on the part of such spirit operators. "Poor, deluded deceivers," the philosopher would have said, "do they not perceive that these intelligent powers declare themselves laws and forces, declare it always and with one voice?" And they would have voted the spirit-operating contradictors to the lunatic asylum. It has not happened so, but on the contrary, and the philosophers must put up with it as well as they can.

Mr. Jackson highly applauds the saying of Sir David Brewster that "spirit was the last thing he would give in to;" he thinks he "never said anything more worthy of his well-won fame." Now, if any man ever acted a contemptible and unphilosophical part, it was Sir David on that occasion; and no man, we are convinced, was more aware of this than himself. If Sir David, when the phenomena were before him, had said, "These are very extraordinary phenomena, and deserving of the utmost examination by men of science; but at the same time, I demur as to their being produced by spirits," and had continued to say this, his conduct would have commanded general respect. That it has always been said by those present—and we know this from other unquestionable sources to be true—that he admitted the supernatural character of the phenomena, declaring that it upset the philosophy of his whole life. And these expressions he continued to repeat, till such ideas began to be ridiculed in the newspapers, when he hastened to eat up his own words, and to exhibit himself in a light which was by no means "worthy of his well-won fame."

Notwithstanding this sad spectacle of a philosopher, who, put to the test—notwithstanding Sir David's actually professing to doubt his own senses on the occasion—Mr. Jackson still gravely

asserts that scientific men are the only ones qualified to judge of these phenomena, and to bring to light what they really are. No idea can be more delusive. That scientific men are the best judges of their own natural laws and processes, we readily admit, but that in these phenomena there are laws in operation which they are totally ignorant of, and which they cannot possibly test by any apparatus or materials in their laboratories. Beyond and beside this, they are, from their prejudices and adopted theories, totally disqualified for a clear and effective examination of this question. Their minds have become stereotyped in particular theories to which the phenomena of Spiritualism run counter, and jar against violently. Mr. Jackson himself is a living proof of such men, being totally disqualified for the free and penetrating examination of such a subject. He believes in all the phenomena, but denies the conclusions drawn by the common sense of many millions of men, and can bring himself to believe that intelligences which can come and reason acutely, and make themselves seen, heard, and felt avowedly as individual spirits, are mere laws and forces emanating from, or existing in, the persons who perceive them. And what is really astounding is, that Mr. Jackson, whilst uttering so decided an opinion, shews that he has totally misunderstood the nature of the phenomena on which he dictates. He puts into the same category the "flowers, fruit, birds, etc.," "which form the stock wonders of the circle." He imagines them to issue from the vital forces of the circle itself, and to disappear and dissolve again rapidly. This may apply to the hand which appears at the Davenport *séances*, so far as this connivance is concerned, and to the flowers which were brought by the apparition wife of Mr. L. —, of New York; but the flowers, fruits, &c., which are produced at the *séances* of Mr. Guppy, and the birds which have appeared at these *séances*, are real earthly flowers and birds, which are brought through walls and doors of closed rooms, and remain. No flowers are generally carried away by those present and kept dried in books, or those of any *hortus siccus*. They have been planted and grown. One of the birds remains in a cage to this day. Some of the fruits are kept by those who received them. They were not produced by any physical power of the circle or any consistaneousness of its ideas. They came whence no one knew; and could not, therefore, come in consequence of any internal power executed by the party assembled. They must be brought by beings—reasoning beings out of the flesh; and no philosopher can possibly propound a more simple or palpable theory than the universal one, that they are brought by spirits who affirm themselves to be spirits. Again, the iron collar which we now hear is made

to pass over the head of a youth in America, though seven inches less in interior circumference than the head, is not a collar evolved magically from the minds or the latent forces of the persons of the circle, but is a potential collar made without any hinge or opening by the blacksmith. The philosopher who shall explain this phenomenon must know a great deal more about matter than the most profound physiologist who ever lived; and in our single opinion, it can never be explained except on the hypothesis that matter, under the influence of spirit, is in a condition totally different from its condition when operated upon solely by natural laws, however subtle, irreproachable and potent.

We are so far from entertaining Mr. Jackson's idea that scientific men are the best qualified to examine these singular phenomena, that we feel sure that so soon as they are compelled, like himself, to admit the reality of the facts, their preconceptive and scientific prejudices will lead them vehemently to endeavour to treat them as the results of material laws, as he himself does. This will assuredly become the philosophical phase of the question, whenever the denial of the fact is at an end. We cannot hope that, on having made this step of advance, the philosophers will have got much nearer the truth, because they will, from habit, persist in seeking for the solution of the mystery in a direction in which it is not to be found. The plain sense of mankind will still march on far a-head of them.

We can recommend to Mr. Jackson, and to such enquirers, honest, earnest, truth-loving, as we have no doubt he is, nothing better in their present condition than to give a careful study to the "*Ontology*" of Dr. Doherty. They will there find a man as profound as any of them in practical science, in physics, metaphysics, and the purest psychology, who has made these things the study of a life; who has gone into the labyrinth of human nature, and epicosmic and pancosmic nature, with his eyes and his mind open, and has seen, examined, analysed, and tested all that came under his observation, with an intellect as discriminating as his love of truth is profound. We can at once tell Mr. Jackson and the children of his hope—the philosophers, all about forces and laws, both evolutive and determinative, and that all force, life, form, and quality evolve themselves from the invisible world, so that all these so-called spiritual phenomena now appearing are the result of the continued action of spirits within and without the veil of natural life. We have no hesitation in saying, that Dr. Doherty's system of philosophy is the only one at the present day which deals fearlessly with the phenomena of existence, and which alone can satisfactorily explain them. Whoever admits the correctness of Dr. Doherty's

theory of the world, as a great whole—and we do not see how its correctness can be denied—must necessarily become as firm a Spiritualist as a physicist, and must as necessarily admit the agency of spirits in all these phenomena, simply because he cannot stop at any secondary causation, but is borne on, as a matter of course, to primal causes, and to their action throughout the living universe.

THE WORD OF GOD.

BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE great majority of those who bear the name of Christian assert that the Bible is the Word of God. But it may be profitable to inquire, how is it possible for a book abounding in self-contradictions as the Bible obviously does, to be the Word of the All-Wise and Infallible God? The early chapters of Genesis, down to the life of Abraham, are evidently not historical of mundane events; a considerable portion of the Old Testament treats of the Jews and their curious religion, which in a great measure has ceased to be observed even by the Jews themselves, and which we as Christians do not think it would be right to observe; the religion of the Old Testament, which enjoins slavery, polygamy, retaliation and war, is diametrically opposed to the religion of the New Testament, whose very essence is love and justice—love for the Supreme Will, and consequently justice in all our ways. The views which the Old Testament frequently presents of God, exhibit Him as endowed with human infirmities and instigated by most unworthy passions, whilst in one portion of the New Testament He is depicted as so impartially beneficent that He makes His sun to shine on the evil and the good, and sends His rain on the just and on the unjust; moreover, parts of the Bible are soiled with immoralities of the grossest, the most cruel, and revolting nature. How can such a book be the Word of God? Farther; this book is unknown to millions of the human race, whilst vast multitudes of devout religionists discard it as contradictory to their conceptions of the Word of God. Is it conceivable that the Good Father has not spoken to all these children; that he has not sent to them a gracious Word for comfort and guidance, since they must be equally with Jews and Christians objects of His infinite love? Besides, this world is only one of innumerable worlds, all doubtless the abodes of rational beings. Our Bible cannot,

be their Bible. The history of the Jews and some of the records of the primitive Christians are surely not the Word of God to them. Neither can they be the Word of God to myriads of societies in heaven. Yet has the Lord made no revelation of His will to all these? Has He left them without His Word, which alone can teach them to be godly, useful, and blessed? Having thus expanded our views of the question before us, I may safely declare that God speaks to all His children as they are able to hear Him.

Now, this being the case, it is herein admitted that God speaks in the Bible to those who reverence it as his Holy Word. But as the Bible abounds in errors and contradictions, how can we find in it the pure and living Word of the Lord? It undoubtedly contains golden lights, which it cannot, with any good reason, be denied is radiated from the Sun of Righteousness; but it is also beclouded and darkened with superstition and falsehood, and it is marred by the traces of deadly crimes and cruel injustice. Whilst the good Christian finds refreshment for his spirit in the pages of the Bible, the narrow bigot and the fanatical and implacable persecutor find in the self-same book abundant justification for their intolerance and for all their dark and fiendish deeds. Light and shade, virtue and vice, are plainly discernible on the surface of what is commonly regarded as the Word of God. But beauty and deformity, salubrity and pestilence, fecundity and barrenness, wholesome fruits and poisonous substances, harmless and useful animals, and animals that are savage and destructive, are found in nature, which we nevertheless admit to be the work of the all-pure and perfect God. If, then, we cannot deny that nature is the work of God, although it is disfigured by innumerable disorders, destructive winds, barrenness, pestilence, &c., we cannot in reason deny that the Bible is the Word of God, because it also is stained with what is opposed to the very nature of God.

In my former essay, published in the *Spiritual Magazine*, I showed that nature owes its birth to the supernatural; that all mundane things are the products and manifestations of spiritual things; that every sensuous world is created by the Lord through the souls of its inhabitants, and is, therefore, a mirror in which their voluntary and intellectual condition is faithfully reflected; and that the good and evil in nature, or in any other external and representative world, are the effects and expositions of good and evil in human minds; the good flowing forth from the Lord's creative life in man when he voluntarily lives in agreement with it, the evil being produced by man's selfish opposition to this creative life, whereby he perverts it, distorts it, turning the grace of God into hatred, cruelty, &c., whence it descends into dis-

orderly forms in nature. Thus all natural forms and events are connected with their spiritual causes in man, and through these are connected either harmoniously or discordantly with the great First Cause of all things. Whatever is good and beautiful, whatever is noble and beneficent in the outer world, is a revelation, to those whose minds are open, of what is good and wise and orderly in God's kingdom in man; but whatever is foul and pernicious in nature is a revelation, to those who are truly enlightened, of what, through the preference of self-love to love of the Lord and the neighbour, is still impure and hurtful in God's kingdom in the human soul. Both the good and the bad, then, must be equally the Lord's Word to those who have ears that have learnt to hear; the former declaring that when we honestly and judiciously do good we are certain to reap good, and the latter declaring that whenever we violate the laws of life in ourselves we turn good into evil, blessing into cursing, and that the evil we have done will be sure to find us out, will rise up against us and condemn us, will punish us and correct us for our wickedness and folly. Thus viewed, the whole of nature is the Word of God; and as the Bible is a record of good and evil actions, of wise and foolish sayings, of parables and psalms and prophecies, constructed of natural imagery, and intended to shadow forth the states of the will and understanding of man, both the just and the unjust, it too is the Word of God to all who can read it aright.

But now the prospect widens before us! Cannot we see that there must be a Word of God in everything? In the daily and the weekly press, in domestic happiness and family afflictions, in battles and murders and sudden deaths, in false friends and sterling benefactors, in all kinds of histories, sciences, so-called sacred books, and mythologies, does not God speak to us, as we are willing to hear Him? If we can discern the signs of the times, or the temporary symbols that always surround us, we may see that these are all the Word of God, being all the unveilings of His presence and operations in us and by means of us, according to our state and free co-operation. Once see that every natural or sensuous thing has a spiritual side, either in unison, or discord, with the Infinite and Eternal Spirit who, as far as we can apprehend Him, is goodness and wisdom itself, and then we shall distinctly see our Father wherever we may be, and shall hear His Word, whenever we are disposed to listen for it, in every object, whether right or wrong, that may be recognised by any of our senses.

But who is to be the interpreter of this Word of God as written on everything that is brought before us? Do we need a hierarchy claiming infallibility in the matter? Do we require a

number of sects, each applauding the right of private judgment, but all persecuting to the utmost of their power every honest and independent mind that conscientiously differs from their conclusions? No; the world has had these interpreters long enough. The confusion they have produced there is no necessity to describe. What is required is that every one should hear for himself what the Spirit of God has to say unto him. Intuition, instinct, conscience, deep and holy feeling, the conclusions of sound judgment and good common sense, wholesome fears, truthful premonitions, are Words of God to those who receive them; and many are undoubtedly taught in this way who do not know a letter of a book. But this inner teaching is brought forth into shape and tangible form, it is put sensibly before man in events and circumstances; and the rightful interpreter of these, too, is the individual mind to which they are sent, aided, by whatever means, by the good and wise Spirit that sends them. Every available help may be used; the opinions of other men may be heard with all due respect, and may and ought to be examined as searchingly and minutely as possible in order to discover their real worth; but the individual judgment should be kept free, and should impartially decide for itself what is true and right, in other terms, what is the Word of God to it.

I have been able to sketch but the merest outline of this subject, which is of universal importance; but enough has been said to rescue the subject from the narrowness in which it has for ages been confined by the darkness of ordinary theological opinions. It may now be discovered by any one who will honestly and without prejudice consider the question, that it is the Lord God Himself who speaks in every call to duty—professional, mercantile, commercial, agricultural, political, social, domestic, and personal; that His Word is not a dead history, but a continuous inspiration; not a few barren speculations which the many are to receive on the authority of the few, but the still voice of God, saying to every man, "This is the way, walk thou in it"—the way being always the way of neighbourly love, and consequently the way of security and peace. This wide, holy, and satisfying view of God's Word destroys nothing, but would fulfil all things, or exhibit them as instinct with spirit and with life. Above all, this simple view of the Word of God, in place of encouraging the deluded belief that the duties which His Word enjoins are but a few ecclesiastical ordinances—all other works being secular, or non-religious, transacted necessarily according to worldly and selfish notions—plainly teaches that as God is speaking continually, instructing us in all things it is our duty to do, and warning us against doing what should never be done, He, and He only, should be continually obeyed, and every

act, however trifling, performed as an act of duty to Him. If He were so obeyed, as He ought to be, since His will is always best, this world would be a paradise.

3, Richmond Terrace,
Middleton, Manchester.

WM. HUME-ROTHERY.

PREMONITION.

(From a MS. of J. Cook, M.D., dated Leigh, September 18, 1765).

“EVER since I was three and twenty years of age I have had an invisible being or beings attend me at times, at home and abroad, that has by some token given me notice I should shortly certainly lose a particular friend or patient. They began from my marriage till the decease of my first wife, in May, 1728, when they were very troublesome about my house, as was noticed by our friends and neighbours. After that, they came seldom, and I really hope they will not leave me as long as I live, though my spouse wishes otherwise, to whom they are not so agreeable. Rarely has any patient, or any friend that I respected, departed, but I have some kind of sensible notice or warning of it, either by seeing, feeling, or hearing—a week, a month, and more, before their decease, and once only three days, when I actually heard the spiritual agent form an articulate voice, and utter these words with a pathetic emphasis: ‘I am gone’—which was fulfilled the next Monday morning by the sudden death of my cousin’s daughter, who was visiting at my house and well two days before.

“In 1728 I kept a book of account, where I entered every notice or warning, with the particular circumstances, and the succeeding event. The last hint I had was on the 6th July, 1765, at night, being from home attending a patient whom I lost on the 20th July following. I have many times been made sensible of the existence of a different kind of beings from us, subtile and volatile inhabitants of the air, who see and know our affairs here below, and have a concern for us and our welfare. Twice I have seen spectres, but heard and felt them times innumerable. As no created space is void of all being, why should our gross atmosphere be without such inhabitants as are suitable to such an element, and may be the lowest step of the spiritual scale, and the first gradation of a superior order? All histories of this sort cannot be without some foundation; and Whiston as well as Le Clerc say the opinion of spectres is neither unreasonable nor unphilosophical, and may well exist in the nature of things.”

CHR. COOKE:...

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

HAUNTING IN IRELAND.

WE should be glad to have a verification of the curious facts stated in the following extract from the *Derry Standard*:—

EXTRAORDINARY AND MYSTERIOUS OCCURRENCES.—In this age of common sense and disbelief in superstition, to find circumstances impossible to explain by ordinary criteria, awes and astonishes more than mere rustics. Such circumstances have been occurring in the village of Tillymoan, situated about a mile from Claudy, Strabane. The house of a man named Speers has been the object of some mysterious destructive agency for weeks past. The owner was threshing oats in the barn, and in every sheaf he found two or three small stones—this went on so long that he found himself compelled to cease. Then he was startled by a noise in the stable, and he went in there carrying his flail with him, which he dropped behind the horse, that he might fetch away a tub from the animal's head, and lo! the flail disappeared, and has not since been found. Then the kitchen fire got scattered through the floor; the plates and dishes were smashed off the dresser, and the pots and cans began to walk about through the apartments. Then stones began to fly in all directions, cutting every one daring enough to approach the haunted dwelling. The panes of glass next began to be smashed; so, for safety, the windows were taken out and locked up in a press; but the mysterious visitors were too wise, for soon press, windows and chairs were smashed to pieces. The turf-stacks kept oscillating like a poplar tree; hammering constantly resounded from the chimney, and the stones kept flying in all directions, pelting and cutting and bleeding those venturous enough to risk visiting the place. On Friday evening week the crowds gathered distinctly saw a pot come flying through the door and fall in smashed pieces on the street. A religiously-inclined inhabitant of the locality volunteered to lay the Evil One, and so he repaired to the spot in vaunted hopes of success. Alas for human calculation! The stones rattled about his ears in the fated kitchen, they fell on his wrists, spraining them; and on his feet, hurting them. The combat was too unequal, his opponents were invisible, so he considered retreat justifiable. Strange to say, the disturbances ceased on Sunday last, from about 10 a. m. to 5 p. m., when they began with renewed vigour. Not alone in the house, but through the owner's lands—though no farther—do the stones pelt away the crowds. The circumstance is an extraordinary one, and is creating an extraordinary amount of excitement far and near. For miles round the people flock to see and certify regarding the unusual wonder. The people have fled the house, and all about it and within are in fearful confusion. The event deserves notice and investigation from its many peculiarities.

We find the following extract in a subsequent number of the same paper:—

STRABANE.

THE LATE MYSTERIOUS PROCEEDINGS AT TILLYMOAN, CLAUDY.—The excitement in connexion with the above mysterious affair has not in the least subsided, but, on the contrary, has spread to such an extent, that on last Sunday and the preceding one large crowds from Strabane, Lifford and surrounding district, flocked to the residence of Speer, in whose house, it will be recollected, the mysterious work of destruction has been going on, to witness, as some of them expressed it, the performance of the Tillymoan ghost. However, I believe they were all, with one exception, sadly disappointed in their expectations, as the ghost was not at home to any of the numerous visitors who called to make his acquaintance. One person, a most respectable farmer, who resides in the

next townland to where Speer's house is situate, told me that while talking to Mrs. Speer on Wednesday, he observed smoke issuing from a portion of the roof which suddenly broke out in a bright red flame. The application of a few buckets of water had the desired effect, when all became tranquil again. To shew, he said, that this could not possibly be the result of accident, or of any mischief-making person, none were in the house at the time, with the exception of Mrs. Speer and himself. On Wednesday morning last, a little boy, who is an inmate of Speer's residence, was kindling the fire, when the coals were suddenly lifted off the hearth and scattered in all directions through the house. On Monday last, an incident, calculated to create much fun, occurred. Two policemen, who were passing through the locality, seeing a large crowd collected round Speer's, thought they too would go and see for themselves. They accordingly proceeded to the house, which they entered, and where a great many neighbours were already assembled. One of the constables finding no chairs or any other substitute for a seat, (those articles having been all previously smashed) leaned over an old chest, when with a loud, long crash in went the lid, precipitating the unfortunate guardian of the peace to the bottom, where he lay for some considerable time to the evident enjoyment of some of the on-lookers, while more taking it for the commencement of performance, beat a hasty retreat from the dreaded premises. Scarcely a day has passed for the last fortnight without some fresh manifestation of the presence of the terrible, yet invisible mischief-maker. Surely it is a subject calculated in many respects to excite curiosity, and one for many reasons calling for a strict enquiry into the whole affair.

THE QUEEN'S DIARY.

Several of the Sovereigns of Europe are adepts in spiritual belief and phenomena, and the Queen appears from the following extract from her *Diary*, to be wise and simple-hearted enough to express her feeling in the same direction. It is not strongly defined, but one can see, better than say what the Queen means, by referring to the "old shoe" and her "lucky house" at Balmoral, and the wind upsetting the Inkerman bonfire:—

An old shoe was thrown after us into the new house for good luck, when we entered the hall. The place is charming: the rooms delightful; the furniture, paper—everything—perfection.

September. 10, 1855:—All were in constant expectation of more telegraphic despatches. At half-past ten o'clock two arrived—one for me and one for Lord Granville. I began reading mine, which was from Lord Clarendon, with details from Marshal Pelissier of the further destruction of the Russian ships; and Lord Granville said, "I have still better news," on which he read—"From General Simpson:—Sevastopol is in the hands of the Allies." God be praised for it. Our delight was great; but we could hardly believe the good news, and from having so long, so anxiously expected it, one could not realise the actual fact.

Albert said they should go at once and light the bonfire which had been prepared when the false report of the fall of the town arrived last year, and had remained ever since, waiting to be lit. On the 5th of November, the day of the battle of Inkerman, *the wind upset it, strange to say, and now again, most strangely, it only seemed to wait for our return to be lit.*

The new house seems to be lucky, indeed; for, from the first moment of our arrival, we have had good news.

A STRANGE APPARITION.

WE are indebted to the Paris correspondent of the *Nation* for the following narrative:—

“My friend, Colonel Sir William D——, an officer in the British army, having seen much service in various parts of the world, has been for some time past residing in Paris with his family, consisting of his wife, two sons, and a highly accomplished and charming daughter. From Sir William and his daughter I have the following story, which I give—changing only the names and initials of the parties—exactly as they told it to me a few evenings ago:—

“‘The eldest son, when pursuing his studies, a very few years since, at the Military College of Sandhurst, near London, was on intimate terms with another of the cadets, whom we will call Hartly. Young Hartly was a general favourite in the college, a promising, active young fellow, fond of the sports usually played by young men in England, and especially addicted to cricket. On Saturday afternoon, young Hartly having been absent for some time from the college on a visit to his parents in London, the pupils all turned out for a game of cricket. It was a fine sunny afternoon; the cricket-ground was full of animation, and the game was going on merrily. Presently, to the surprise and satisfaction of all the pupils, young Hartly was seen to enter the ground, dressed as usual and looking in all respects exactly like his usual self. He went up to the ushers and shook hands with them, and with a number of the pupils. All present appear to have seen him perfectly, and to have felt pleased at seeing him come back. Presently he threw himself on the ground, took a cigar from his pocket, lighted it, and began to smoke, watching the game, meanwhile, with his usual interest, and every now and then commenting upon its progress, criticising this stroke, applauding that, and seeming as intent on the game as any of the players. At length he suddenly drew out his watch, and started to his feet, exclaiming, “I am wanted in London at four o’clock, and I must be off at once, for I have but just time to catch the train,” and rushed from the ground in the direction of the railway station. Much surprised at so sudden a departure, several of the pupils took out their watches and discussed his chances of being in London by four o’clock, as it then wanted but a few minutes of that hour.

“‘Next day brought to the astonished inmates of the college the news of young Hartly’s death, which had occurred the preceding day at his father’s house, exactly at four o’clock. He

had fallen ill during his visit home, and, as was afterwards ascertained, had not once left his bed from the time of his falling ill. It was also ascertained that during the whole of that last day, through which he lay in a sort of quiet stupor, his mother had never left his bedside. "We've seen a real apparition for once in our lives!" was the shuddering admission of the cadets when the news of Hartly's decease reached them. But the awkwardness of such an admission, and the impossibility of classifying or explaining so inconvenient a fact as the visible and tangible presence of their comrade on the cricket-ground while he was really dying in his bed in London, were too obvious not to produce a certain reaction; and so it came to pass that, in course of time, the cadets gave up the idea of having "seen an apparition," and settled down on the more convenient hypothesis of an "hallucination." A few of the number, however, of whom young D—— is one persist firmly in their first belief in regard to this remarkable incident, and stoutly declare that they did see, touch, and hear the perfect image of their friend, though utterly unable to explain the nature of such an appearance."

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I do not observe that reference is often made in the *Spiritual Magazine* to the French periodicals on Spiritualism.

In the March (1867) number of the *Revue Spirite* there is an account given, if not of a new phase of spirit communication, yet of a large development of what has been experienced in the circle from whence I have received my convictions, and, probably, in other circles also, which might interest some of your readers, and of which I, therefore, venture to send you a translation.

The article is entitled "Communications Collective," and was made to the *Société de Paris*, through the medium, M. Desliens, on the 6th of December, 1866, in continuation of those made to the same society, through M. Bertrand, on the 1st of November, when the society held a special meeting for the commemoration of the dead—that being All Saints' Day.

The new feature by which the *séance* was distinguished, was the delivery by various spirits of a series of aphorisms, which, when linked together, form a chain of doctrine in beautiful accordance with that delivered by Christ, and taught by his Apostles, and of the truth of which fresh assurances are permitted to be given through those higher spirits who are sent in love to help our weaknesses, and to strengthen our faith.

Permit me to remain, yours faithfully,

RICHARD BEAMISH.

Woolston Lawn, Southampton, Oct., 1867.

A few of these aphorisms only are here appended:—

Love is a lyre, the vibrations of which form the Divine harmony.

HELOISE.

Love has three chords to its lyre: divine emanation, poetry, and song. Should one of these be wanting, the accord is imperfect.

ABELARD.

True love is perfect harmony, through which the soul is elevated. Passion impairs the accord by debasing the soul.

BERNARD DE ST. PIERRE.

To love is to be wise. Seek, then, love through wisdom.

FENELON.

You cannot be wise if you do not know how to elevate yourself above the malice of men.

VOLTAIRE.

A wise man is he who is unconscious of his wisdom.

CORNEILLE.

Humility dreads pride, while he who thinks himself humble is not so.

RACINE.

You will err if you confound with the humble those who say they are so from affected modesty or from motives of interest. The contrary is the fact: truth is silent.

BONNEFOND.

Immutability does not exist in any form of words, but rather in the primary elements of thought.

LAMMENAES.

The doctrine of Jesus cannot be comprehended but by the heart. Whatever, therefore, may be the manner of its announcement, it is always love and charity.

BOSSUET.

Prayers said or written which are not understood leave but vague impressions, permitting the senses to be distracted by the pageantry of ceremonies.

MASSILLON.

Love will triumph, and that its reign be not delayed it is necessary, courageous Diogenes, to take the torch of Spiritualism and shew to mankind the true gangrenes which corrode the soul.

ST. LOUIS.

The Editor adds: "This sort of communication raises an important question. How is it that the fluids of so great a number of spirits are able to become assimilated almost instantaneously with the fluid of the medium, in order that the spirits' thoughts may be transmitted, where this assimilation is often difficult for a single spirit, and then accomplished only after a considerable time?"

The guardian spirit of the medium seemed to have anticipated the question, for the next day the following explanation was spontaneously afforded:—

"The communication which you received on All Saints' Day, as well as subsequently, although from various spirits, was obtained in the following manner:

"As your guardian spirit, my fluid is similar to yours. I place myself immediately above you in order to transmit in the most direct manner the thoughts and the names of the spirits which desire to communicate. Around me the spirits arrange themselves, dictating one by one the thoughts which I am to transmit.

"This is spontaneous—and what on that day facilitated so much the communication was the circumstance that the room was saturated with their fluids. The more perfect the fluid connection (*rappor*t) between the spirit and the medium, the easier can communication be made; should that *rappor*t prove insufficient, the spirit is compelled to establish a sort of magnetic current which is directed to the brain of the medium, and if the spirit desiring to communicate cannot establish that current, either on account of its inferiority, or from any other cause, recourse must be had to the guardian spirit, through which the connection may be established, as indicated above."